

KING JESUS

From Kam (Egypt)
to Camelot



RALPH ELLIS

The sequel to '*Cleopatra to Christ*'

King Jesus, Prince of Judaea and Rome

New ebook edition

King Jesus,

Prince of Judaea and Rome

King Jesus and his bid for the Throne
of Rome

King Jesus of Judaea and King Arthur
of England

by

Ralph Ellis



Edfu Books

King Jesus, from Kam (Egypt) to Camelot

First published in 2008 by Edfu Books

Published in the U.K. by:

Edfu Books

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CW8 4WF, UK

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First edition April 2008

Second edition April 2009

Third edition e-book edition 2010
Fourth colour edition May 2013
Fifth edition December 2013

v5.7

E-book edition.

ISBN 9781-10509-2466

Muse

*To the Jews I became as a Jew,
so that I might gain the Jews.
To those who are under the Law, I
became as under the Law,
so that I might gain those who
are under the Law.
To those who are outside Law, I
became as outside Law,
so that I might gain those who
are outside Law.
To the weak I became as the weak,
so that I might gain the weak.
I am made all things to all men.*

The

unsci

philos
of
St
Josep
Flavi
(St
Paul)
the
creat
of
Chris
1
Cor
9:20-
22

*I saw in his hand a long spear of
gold,
and at the iron's point there seemed to
be a little fire.*

*He appeared to me to be thrusting it
at times into my heart,
and to pierce my very entrails;
when he drew it out, he seemed to
draw them out also,
and to leave me all on fire with a
great love of God.*

*The pain was so great, that it made
me moan;
and yet so surpassing was the
sweetness of this excessive pain,
that I could not wish to be rid of it.*

*The soul is satisfied now with nothing
less than God.*

The
erotic
philos
of St
Teres

The
Life
of St
Teres
of
Jesus
29:17

Acknowledgments

First and foremost I would like to thank John Hart, whose great enthusiasm goaded me into writing this book. It was intended as a joint effort on the subject of Saul-Josephus, but no agent or publisher was forthcoming and the project stalled. However, the concept still looked worthwhile, so I built it into an investigation into the entire New Testament. But I must again thank John for the first part of the introduction, which stands as originally written. I hope that the result of this long endeavour speaks for itself, for the result is my biggest and most comprehensive book so far, and I hope readers will be astounded at the results of this research.

I would also like to thank Peter Gotto of Counter Culture, my new UK distributor, for taking over the important job of representation and sales. Likewise, I would like to thank David Hatcher-Childress, my USA distributor at Adventures Unlimited, for his tireless efforts to promote this series of books. I would not still be in the business of research and authorship if it were not for the US arm of this enterprise. Thanks also go to Daria

Renshaw, my tenacious editor who has to contend with a myriad of unfamiliar names and terms. And finally, I should not forget the jacket design team. This was a joint effort including myself as designer, Ian von Stietencron who so expertly painted the image of Jesus as a warrior-king, and Howard Blythe who masterminded all the digital wizardry that stitches it all together.

www.hwb.me.uk/

www.stietencron-portraits-gallery.co.uk/

Ralph Ellis

March 2008

Cheshire.

www.edfu-books.com

Advertisement

Jesus, *Last of the Pharaohs*

Ralph Ellis

Jesus, Last of the Pharaohs narrates a radically new interpretation of the biblical story and shows that it was really a tale of desperate power struggles between two Egyptian royal dynasties; a story of riches and power beyond dreams, of flights from mortal danger, of rejection, despair and even of death.

— the sequel to *Jesus* —

Tempest & Exodus

Ralph Ellis

Tempest & Exodus proves that all the Judaic

religions, including Christianity, were based on an ancient Egyptian ritual. More importantly, perhaps, it also shows that the Egyptians knew of and wrote about the biblical plagues and exodus, and that the Israelites were paid to leave Egypt by the Theban pharaoh Ahmose I!

– the sequel to *Tempest* –

Solomon, *Pharaoh of Egypt* Ralph Ellis

Solomon, Pharaoh of Egypt sets out to discover the identity of the Queen of Sheba, and instead discovers a theological cover-up of immense proportions. Not only can the legendary Queen of Sheba be found in the ancient annals, so too can the elusive King David and King Solomon. The only problem for theologians is that this queen did not originate from either Saba or Ethiopia, and these

famous Judaic kings did not come from Israel! Read the shocking truth that has been subject to a high-level cover-up for nearly three thousand years.

— the sequel to *Solomon* —

Eden in Egypt

Ralph Ellis

The Bible describes a river flowing out of Eden to water the Garden, and then splitting into four branches (Genesis 2:10). There is only one river in this region that fits that description, and that is the River Nile. Following on from this observation, it became apparent that there were great similarities between the early sections of the Genesis account and the Hymn to the Aten. Indeed, it soon became apparent that Adam and Eve were actually the famous royal couple from the city of Amarna — Akhenaton and Nefertiti.

— the sequel to *Eden*—

Scota, *Egyptian Queen of the Scots*

Ralph Ellis

Some six hundred years ago, Walter Bower set out to record the known history of the Irish and Scottish people. Drawing on records from the first millennium AD, the astounding account he wrote maintained that the Irish and Scottish people were descended from Queen Scota, who was an Egyptian princess. It is from Scota and her husband Gaythelos that the names for the Scottish and Gaelic people were derived. Needless to say, it has been assumed that this account is mythological; however, Ralph has amassed sufficient information to demonstrate that it is true history, and that the Irish and Scots people were descended from a daughter of Pharaoh Akhenaton.

— the sequel to *Scota*—

Cleopatra *to* Christ

Ralph Ellis

The Bible says that the infant Jesus was visited by the Magi of the east, and that he was educated in Egypt. Jesus also seemed to be of royal blood, and hence was crowned as King of the Jews. The inference from these sparse facts is that Jesus was of both Egyptian and Persian royal blood, but that he was exiled to Judaea in about AD 4. This may appear to be an impossible family history to reconstruct but, strange as it may seem, there was a royal family from the early first century AD that fits all of these requirements. Although this family's history has been known about for hundreds of years, theologians and historians have failed to make the obvious deductions.

– the sequel to *King Jesus*–

Jesus, King of Edessa

Ralph Ellis

This is the book that the Catholic Church has been dreading for the last 1700 years. This is the book that will end Christianity as we know it. We now know who Jesus was, where he lived, and who his family were. Visit his city, see the ruins of his citadel, gaze upon his statue, handle his coins. In reality, Jesus was a son of King Abgarus of Edessa, a princeling with a small realm, a large treasury, and even bigger ambitions. But the wise prince of northern Syria came up against an intractable Rome and his many plans crumbled to dust. As readers might imagine, the true history of this region undermines much of the biblical fairy-story that the gospel authors crafted, and so Christianity will never be the same again.



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Appendix 1 Temple of Bel

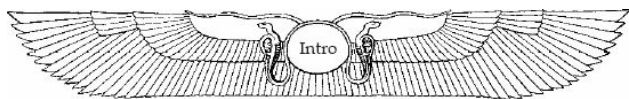
*Appendix 2 Water to
Wine*

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Author and Historian

A man sits at a table, writing. He wears a loose-fitting ruddy-brown cloak and centurion's sandals. A heavy grey-blue shaft of light slants down from some high windows onto shelves stuffed with scrolls and parchment books, illuminating the dust and lamp-smoke billowing through the air. We are in a library; we are in Jabneh, the new Judaic university and administrative capital after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.

A servant precedes us, setting

down on the table a pewter goblet of what looks like red wine, careful not to disturb his master's manuscripts or upset the pot of ink. We hang back, but before we can be introduced the writer waves away the hovering servant, distractedly. No matter. We have waited more than nineteen hundred years to make this man's acquaintance and a little longer will be of no consequence. Now, accustomed to the smoky, musty stillness of the university library, and breathing only as lightly as we dare, we even fancy we can hear the man's pen scratching as it moves across the fine velum parchment. What is it that he is writing? Not what you would think.

For before us is one of the lost men of history – none other than St Paul (St Saul) himself. Regarded by most theologians as being the true

founder of Christianity, rather than the gospel Jesus, here is the man who has dramatically changed the beliefs of billions of people and the fate of many nations. Here is the man whose legacy divided a European empire, forged a new one, and then split it asunder once more. Yet the true identity of this man, the progenitor of western civilization who forged much of the social world that we see before us, has eluded all enquirers and researchers – until now.

But what is St Paul writing? Well, it is not one of the many epistles from the New Testament, and it is not the Acts of the Apostles. So, if not a work of religious inspiration, what is it that our evangelist is writing? Strange as it may seem, it is a long and detailed history of his people, the Jews. And the name of this great literary work? It is *The Antiquities of the Jews*, St

Paul's personal version of the Tanakh or Old Testament. And if this may seem surprising, then dare we ask his real name? The answer is not that simple, for 'Paul' was merely a nickname that the great historian used during his evangelical missions around Europe, as was the name 'Saul' that he used during his youth. Only now have we discovered his real name and, incredible as it may seem, that name was Josephus Flavius.

The names, lives and histories of Josephus Flavius and Saul-Paul may initially appear to be radically different, if not completely incompatible, and yet it will be shown readily enough, and in great detail, that these 'two' individuals were nonetheless a single person. Here before us is Saul-Josephus: one of the protean survivalists of history, a man

who harboured a mind of twistedly audacious brilliance and whose personality combined cunning and guile in equal measure.

Whiston

Now let us hurtle you forward in time, not to a library on this occasion but to a study; a wood-panelled affair with sparse furnishings and great sheaves of paper strewn all across the desk and floor. The year is 1737 and we are in Cambridge, in the English Fens. We hunch up a fraction: it is appreciably cooler. Before us is William Whiston, bewigged and wearing a blue velvet jacket against the dank chill. Academically gifted, he has succeeded Sir Isaac Newton as the Lucasian professor of mathematics at Cambridge University. Not quite a man of his time,

Whiston is a Christian certainly, but also a believer in Arianism: he believes that while Jesus was divinely inspired, he was just a man, not a god. Thoroughly conversant with the contents of the Bible, Whiston is also a supreme scholar of ancient languages.

We have joined this Englishman in his dank, cold study because of the task upon which he is engaged, quill pen in hand. Whiston has undertaken the monumental task of translating into English, for the first time, the books we witnessed being composed in ancient Judaea – Josephus Flavius' *Antiquities* and his *Jewish Wars*.

Suddenly, Whiston pauses, raises his quill in a subdued salutation to his ancient fellow writer, while a thin smile tickles his lips. It would appear that we have arrived just as Whiston has gained a potentially

momentous insight. Whiston will go on to commit this insight to paper, but he will fail to follow it through to its logical conclusion. What he had just observed was (paraphrased):

*Josephus's work and the
Letters of St Paul
are written in the same
style.*^{J1}

This was an adroit and somewhat bold observation for the era, but the logical deduction that Whiston failed to make was:

*Josephus' work and the
Letters of St Paul
were therefore penned by
the same hand.*

Whiston may have been an Arian, and therefore a ‘heretic’ to Catholic orthodoxy, but he knew Josephus’ works better than any man and so he knew full well the scale and import of the genie that this observation and association would release into the world. This was early eighteenth century England. The bitter civil wars against Catholic hegemony had only just been won, life was only just returning to normal, perhaps this was not the time to raise the possibility that evidence for the real historical Saul (St Paul) – and therefore evidence for the real historical Jesus – was lying in great sheaves all across his study floor.

Zeitgeist

A paradox of history is that on some occasions the further an event recedes

in time the closer we can get to its true understanding. It takes a while for things to come to light and for people's perceptions to change: hundreds of years, sometimes thousands. Yet, even taking this effect into account, there appear to be so many mysteries which have baffled previous generations that are only now being examined and resolved. Our current epoch is one of especially pivotal significance and the zeitgeist is changing once more for mankind.

But it can only change if we open our eyes to the possibilities, to become enlightened by *gnosis* rather than blinded by dogma. As Professor Robert Eisenman says in his vast tome on the New Testament – *The New Testament Code*:

This is how to read texts, with one's eyes open. But in order to do this, one has to have

a proper sense of history and literary genre, and not just ignore them on the basis of 'artificial' parameters one might be following.²

This is a cry for an open-minded approach to theological study, from a professional in the field whose own research has been hampered by orthodox scholars who will not deviate from their curiously early dating of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

However, having demanded an open mind, Eisenman's own mind is completely closed to the possibility that Jesus may still have been alive in AD 70, and it is this blindness that has blighted much of his research. Time after time, Eisenman has unearthed evidence that points towards the Dead Sea Scrolls being the fervent transcripts of Jewish revolutionaries involved in the Jewish War of AD 65 -

70, but time after time he evades that issue. He does so because his evidence clearly points towards those same 'Jewish revolutionaries' actually being the main characters from the New Testament accounts; but Eisenman refuses to believe that the hero-figure of those ancient scrolls could be Jesus himself, for the date he has determined for the scrolls is far too late for the orthodox chronology of Christianity. The result of Eisenman's chronological blindness is a hugely complicated book with a wealth of data, but absolutely no conclusions. In contrast, this book will explore new possibilities, seek out new facts and new perspectives, and boldly go where no theological book has gone before.

Gnosis versus Faith

As has already been mentioned, it is probable that with this book many religious and historical mysteries can at last be laid to rest: with the true, historical identity of Saul-Paul being the first of these mysteries to be deciphered and explained. But why should this matter to the enlightened people of the twenty-first century, you might ask?

Well, the discovery of Saul-Paul in the historical record is vitally important because it transpires that Saul was *the* great literary giant of the first century AD, and his prolific jottings hold the key to a great deal of 'unknown' history. Cracking open the door to Saul's (Josephus') library at the Jabneh university will shed valuable light on this dimly-lit apparition known as 'ancient history'; and with this extra illumination, and

the extra information and understanding it provides, it is likely that more historical truths will become apparent. Indeed, this is exactly what happened during this research, and a 'simple' book about the life of Saul-Paul suddenly became a book about the life, crucifixion and exile of Jesus.

In many respects the New Testament accounts appear to be utterly divorced from real history, but with the aid of the historical Saul-Paul (Josephus) we will be able to extract increasing elements of real history from the gospel mythology. This will lead us to some momentous discoveries regarding the biblical family; who they were, where they lived, what their true ancestry was and, perhaps most importantly of all, what their social position within the hierarchy of Judaeian life was. For —

contrary to the popular perception that is deceitfully peddled by the Christian clergy – rather than being paupers, Mary Magdalene and Jesus, whose teachings and legacy have shaped much of the modern world, were actually rich aristocrats. Indeed, they were the wealthiest couple in Jerusalem, born of an illustrious Egypto-Persian royal line.

This, of course, is why their opinions and message were so important, for they were the leading couple of their day within the entire region of the Near East. That their influential position in society was relegated, by the later Christian Church, to that of humble artisans was due not only to the devious and scheming activities of Saul (Josephus), but also to the extraordinary circumstances that existed after the fall

of Jerusalem in AD 70. Here was a unique opportunity, when the entire population was in turmoil and the majority of records were destroyed, to rewrite all of Judaeian history; and that is exactly what was done.

That Saul (Josephus) achieved this onerous task so comprehensively, with the historical truth lying dormant for nearly two thousand years, is a tribute to the brilliance of his depraved mind. It is also a testament to the strength and influence of a self-perpetuating organisation, Christianity, which will do anything within its power to maintain itself, even if its leaders understand that the whole edifice is built upon a lie. And yes, Christianity is a complete and utter lie, an edifice built upon deception and deceit; for let us not delude ourselves that this creed has anything to do with

the Church of Jesus.

As we shall see, the belief system Jesus was following and promoting was actually very ancient indeed, and firmly rooted in the timeless mists of Egyptian history. This was not a belief system based upon something as intangible and insubstantial as faith; instead it was firmly based upon the doctrine of *gnosis* γνῶσις (knowledge) – a reasoned and logical understanding of the cosmos and the divine. So the creed of Jesus and James was not born with these great leaders, and neither did it die with them, for it was too well-established for that. Instead, it underwent a change of name and identity, and it resurfaced during the Reformation and Enlightenment eras: firstly as alchemy (literally, ‘of Egypt’) and subsequently as *scientia* or


‘science’. Actually, there was no real change here at all, for the Greek *gnosis* γνῶσις translates directly into the Latin *scientia* – and so modern science is simply an extension of the *gnosis* of the Church of Jesus.

Jesus in England

But this story does not end upon a cross in Jerusalem, as the Church would like us to think, and so we shall proceed further – much further – for we shall eventually discover that Jesus visited England. But perhaps ‘visit’ is the wrong verb here, for this was not a voluntary evangelical mission, it was a forced exile to the opposite end of the world for a rebellious Egypto-Persian prince from Judaea. Yes, those feet, in ancient times, did walk upon England's mountains green; even if they were

accompanied by the reverberating tramp of Roman hobnailed sandals. There, in the ancient Roman city of Chester, Jesus built a church – or perhaps, considering its splendour, one should call it a cathedral – which served as the cultural center of his Church.

But this was not a Christian cathedral as we would understand it, for that creed was the invention of Saul-Josephus. Instead, the edifice that Jesus built in England was dedicated to things of a more cosmic nature, as we shall discover. It is likely that Jesus lived in Chester until his death in AD 101, a date much later than traditionally ascribed to him, and he became as famous in his land of exile as in his native lands in the East. However, the people on the wild northwestern frontiers of the Roman

empire did not know him as 'Jesus' (meaning 'Osiris') nor as 'Christ' (meaning 'king'), instead they simply called him Atur-tii  (meaning 'the Egyptian'). Such a name might not be immediately familiar to readers, but in the local Celtic transliteration this became 'Arthur'. Thus, the popular mythology that this forced exile spawned was of King Arthur and the Twelve Disciples of the Round (Last Supper) Table – Arthur, the warrior king of Judaeo-Syria and England.

As readers can probably see, there is much to be discovered in this research, and many entrenched opinions to change. But how different the world would have been if King Jesus had been the victor, in this battle of mortal giants; if Jesus had triumphed over Saul-Josephus. Perhaps, with

knowledge and understanding being the primary tenets of the Church of Jesus, technology and modern science may have developed back in the Dark Ages, and mankind may have already been on its way to the stars. But it was not to be. It is entirely possible that the work of one deranged mind, that of Saul-Josephus, set the progress of civilisation in the Western world back by more than a thousand years; just as the bellicose, nihilistic cult of Muhummad is threatening to do in the twenty-first century. It is a sobering thought, and perhaps one that should shock us into becoming more active in the democratic system, where such systems exist.

**We should choose our
leaders and philosophers
more wisely.**

Adiabene = kingdom in
Persia, around
Mosul. More
probably a
reference to
Palmyra.

Antioch = City in
northwestern
Syria.

Aurania = See Auranitis
below.

Auranitis = Region to the east
of the river
Jordan.

Babylon = Southern and
eastern Iraq.

Berytus = Beirut.

Bethanya = Region to the east
of the river
Jordan.

Bithynia = Northern Turkey.

Byblos	=	Coastal city north of Beirut.
Caesarea	=	Coastal town in Israel, north of Joppa.
Carthage	=	Roman city near Tunis in Tunisia.
Cilicia	=	Southeastern Turkey.
Chaldaeae	=	Iraq, near the Persian Gulf.
Commagene	=	Southeastern Turkey.
Cyrenacia	=	Northern Libya.
Dacia	=	Western Black sea area.
Decapolis	=	The ten major Roman cities in Syria and

Galilee.

Egypt = Southern Egypt -
Thebes.

Emesa = Modern Homs in
Syria, known
for its sacred
stone.

Galatia = Region in central
eastern Turkey.

Gallia = Southern France.

Gamala = Ancient city in
Syria, NW of
Amman –
Umm el-Jimal.

Gamala = Also a small
citadel on
east-bank of
Galilee.

Gaulanitis = Golan Heights
northeast of the
Sea of Galilee.

Illyricum	=	Yugoslavia.
Israel	=	Region to the west of the Sea of Galilee.
Jabneh	=	University run by Josephus after Jewish War, located just south of Tel Aviv.
Judaea	=	Region around Jerusalem.
Lebanon	=	Coastal strip west of Syria.
Leptis Magna	=	Roman city in Libya.
Levant	=	Coastal strip of Judaea, Lebanon and Syria.

Lydia	=	Western Turkey, near the Maeander river.
Lycia	=	Southwestern Turkey.
Macedonia	=	Northern Greece.
Mauretania	=	Northern Morocco and Algeria, also Tunisia and Libya.
Moesia	=	Bulgaria.
Nabataea	=	Arabian kingdom around southern Dead Sea.
		Oasis city northeast of Damascus, possible

capital of Thea
Muse and
Helen of
Adiabene.

Pamphylia = Region in
southern
Turkey.

Pannonia = Hungry.

Parthia = Originally
Bactria, but the
empire spread
to Iran, Iraq
and eastern
Turkey.

Equivalent of
earlier Persian
Empire.

Petra = Rose-red city in
Nabataea.

Phrygia = Region in central
western

Phrygia	=	western Turkey.
Persia	=	An earlier empire occupying roughly the same region as Parthia.
Philippi	=	Town on the north coast of Greece, east of Thessalonica.
Qumran	=	Settlement on northwest of Dead Sea.
Samaria	=	Region to the west of the river Jordan.
Sarmatia	=	Northern and eastern Black Sea area.

Scythia	=	Sometimes given as Bactria.
Sidon	=	Coastal city south of Beirut.
Syria	=	Modern Syria, but sometimes a term for all of the Levantine coast including Judaea, Israel and Lebanon.
Tarichaeae	=	Town on southwestern point of Sea of Galilee.
Tiberias	=	City on west- bank of Sea of Galilee.
		North eastern

North eastern
Greece,
Thrace = southern
Bulgaria, and
northbank
Istanbul.

Region in
Troad = northwestern
Turkey.

Coastal city south
Tyre = of Sidon and
Beirut.

Characters and organisations:

Leader of
Abba Sikkra = Sicarii,
nephew
Josephus.

Pseudonym
Agabus = Monobazu
King of Syri

		Judaea AD 44.
Agrippa II	=	King of Chæ Syria AD 53, Tetrarch Bethnaya 53 - 100.
Albinus	=	Governor Judaea, c 62 - 64.
Alexander Severus	=	Severan Emper of Rome 222 - 235.
Antipas (Herod)	=	Tetrarch, minor king Galilee 4 AD 39 later of Ju AD 7 - AD
		Tetrarch,

Archelous (Herod)	=	Tetrarch, minor king of Judaea 4 AD 6.
Banus	=	Tutor Josephus. Probably Gamaliel.
Barabbas	=	Probably the Sikkra, leader of the Sicarii
Barnabas	=	Comrade of Paul Josephus his travelling probably brother, Matthias
Barsabas	=	See Barnabas
Berenice	=	Sister-wife Agrippa Mistress

Boethus	=	Jewish aristocrat (step) father of Mary Magdalene and Jesus.
Caligula	=	Emperor of Rome AD 41.
Cephas	=	Another name for Peter.
Clarke, Adam	=	Composed the commentaries on the Bible, 17th century.
Claudius	=	Emperor of Rome, AD 54.
Clemens	=	Nephew of Emperor Vespasian. Husband of Domitilla,

(Titus Flavius)		Husband Domitilla, daughter Vespasian. Known Clement, third 'Christian' pope.
Clement of Rome	=	See Clemens Last Ptole
Cleopatra VII	=	pharaoh Egypt, 51 BC.
Cumanus	=	Governor Judaea, c 48- 52.
Domitian	=	Flavian Emper of Rome AD - 96. Wife

		Severus.
Drusilla	=	Wife of Felix Priest Elagabal.
Elagabalus	=	Severan Emperor Rome AD 218- 222.
Elisabeth	=	Wife Zacharias, mother of the Ba- sister of l (mother Jesus).
Elymas ben Jesus	=	A son of Jesus Ascetic Ju- revolution sect, base Qumran o
Essene	=	Dead

Essene = Dead
Said to
peaceful,
composed
War Scroll

Eusebius = Christian
historian,
bishop
Caesarea
313 - 339.

Fadus = Governor
Judaea, c
44 - 46.

Felix = Governor
Judaea, c
52 - 58.

Festus = Governor
Judaea, c
59 - 62.

Florus = Governor

		Jewish equivalent Fourth Se as recorde Hegesippu Church Jesus James.
Galileans	=	
Gill, John	=	Composed commentar the Bible, century.
Hegesippus	=	Christianised Jew historian, c 2nd centur
Helena	=	Queen Adiabene the AD 40s 50s. Daughte

50s.

Daughter

Queen

Muse Oura

Probably l

the Vi

mother

Mary

Magdalene

Jesus.

King of Judea

Galilee

Herod (the Great) =

Syria 37 B

4 BC.

See Arche

Herod =

Antipas

Philip.

Daughter

Herodias =

Aristobulus

asked

John's head

Irenaeus	=	Bishop of Lyons 2nd century
Izaz	=	Son of Hezekiah Origin of the name 'Jesus'
Jesus Justus	=	Full name Jesus, born 14.
James Justus	=	Brother of Jesus Also called Stephen.
Jesus of Gamala	=	Son of Judas Gamala, governor of Tiberias Bethany. Leader of Galileans AD 30s to 70s, Samaritan biblical Jesus

70s, Samaritan
biblical Jews
born AD 100.
Also called
Jesus
Sapphias.

Johanan ben Zakkai = *De facto*
priest after
of Jerusalem.
Established
university
sanhedrin
Jabneh.

John the Baptist = Pseudonym
Saul-Joseph
Possible leader
of the Essenes
died about
33.

Sor

incorrectly
recorded
the death
Jesus.

Josephus Flavius = Judaean
commande
turned tr
and author

The
person as
(St Paul).

Joses = Brother of Je
Daughter of
Muse Our
wife

Julia Ourania = Ptolemy
Mauretania
Probably
Helena
Adiabene.

		Helena Adiabene.
Judas of Gamala	=	Possible from Pe governor Bethanya.
		Leade Fourth Sec AD 4 to 30s.
Luna	=	Partner of S Magus, called Hel
Macrinus	=	Emperor Rome AD 2 218. No Severan.
		Daughter Simon Boethus, sister-wife

		refers to phallic to
		Mother of J
		Probably
Mary the Virgin	=	as Ourania Helena.
		Successor
Matthias	=	Judas Isca Saul-Josep brother.
		Caesarian
Nero	=	Emperor Rome AD 68.
		Rich man
Nicodemus	=	gospels, (father of l and Ma See Boeth

		and Ma
		See Boeth
Origen	=	Third ce theologian
		Talmudic 1
		for Jo
Pa-nter-ra	=	father. Sar the title g to Ptolem Mauretania
Paul (St)	=	See Saul.
		Tetrarch,
Philip (Herod)	=	minor kin Bethanya to AD 34.
		Son of Phr
Phraataces	=	IV. King Parthia 2 4 AD.
		Son-hus of Queen

		Se
		husband
		Mary
		Virgin?
		King of Pa
		(Persia) 3
Phraates IV	=	BC. Husba
		Thea 1
		Ourania.
		2nd ce
		Christian
Polycarp	=	historian,
		bishop
		Smyrna.
		Roman
Pontius Pilate	=	procurator
		Judaea AD
		36.
Poppaea	=	Errant wife
		Emperor N
		Grandson

		Grandson
Ptolemy of Mauretania	=	Cleopatra first hus of Mary Virgin.
Septimius Severus	=	Severan Em of Rome 193 - 211.
Septuagint	=	Greek Tal written by 'seventy'.
Saul	=	Later calle Paul. Auth many of biblical Epistles, possibly and Acts. Josephus.
Sicarii	=	Title for Je revolution

		Prob
		extreme
		of the Esse
Simon	=	Another nam Peter.
Simon Boethus	=	Another nam Boethus.
		Gnostic pup John Baptist. Possibly J (step) fa Simon
Simon Magus	=	Boethus. Partner Helena-Lu who may been Q Helena Adiabene.
Stephen	=	Probably J

Stephen	=	Probably John Justus.
Talmud	=	Discussions Judaic law history.
Tanakh	=	Old Testament
Tiberius	=	Emperor Rome AD 37.
Titus	=	Roman commander Judaea. Flavian Emperor Rome AD 81.
Thea Muse Ourania	=	Daughter Cleopatra wife Phraates I

		founder Galilean S
Theophilus	=	Possibly Clemens. Possibly Josephus' father.
Torah	=	First five b of the Testament.
Vespasian	=	Roman commande Britain Judaea. Flavian Emperor Rome AD 79.
Whiston, William	=	Translator Saul-Josep 18th centu

Whiston, William	=	Saul-Joseph 18th century
Zacchaeus	=	Rich collector. of Zachari
		May identified Saul-Joseph
		Father of John Baptist Zacchaeus
Zacharias	=	husband Elisabeth. Possible f of Josephus.
Zakkai	=	See Zach and Johana
Zenobia	=	Queen Palmyra 240s - 270

Queen
Egypt c.
270.

See also the list of emperors and high priests in Fig 1.3.

Jesus and his disciples: (numbers and names vary in the different gospels)

Andrew = Brother of
Simon Peter.

Barjonah = See Peter.

Bartholomew = Might be
Nethaniel.

Boanerges = See James or
John.

Cephas = See Peter.

Didymus = See Thomas.

The brother of

James Justus	=	The brother of Jesus. Called the Just or Less. Possibly called Stephen.
James Boanerges	=	Brother of John, son of Zebedee.
Jesus Justus	=	Biblical Jesus. Brother of James, Jude, Joses and Simon. Possible brother of Mary and Martha.
John Boanerges	=	Brother of James and son of

Judas	=	Probably Judas Iscariot.
		Called Labbaius, Thaddaeus, Didymus and Thomas. A Sicarii daggerman. Brother of James and Jesus.
Judas Iscariot	=	
Labbaius	=	See Judas.
		The tax collector (publican).
Matthew	=	New disciple after Judas Iscariot.
Matthias	=	Brother of Saul-

Saul-
Josephus.

Nethaniel = Might be
Bartholomew.

Peter = See Simon
Peter.

Philip = Colleague of
Andrew and
Peter.

St Peter, also
called
Cephas and
Barjonah.

Simon Peter = Peter and
Cephas both
mean 'rock'.
Brother of
Andrew.

Simon
Zelotes = Called the
Canaanite. A
Zealot rebel,

Jesus.

Also called
Judas
Iscariot.

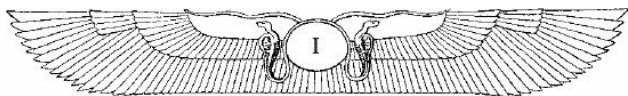
Thaddeaus = Disciple sent
to Queen
Helena to
convert her
people to
Judaism.

Called
Didymus,
probably the
same as Judas
Iscariot. See
Thaddaeus.

Thomas =

Part I

The history of Saul (St
Paul)



History or Faith

Back in the darkened mists of time a pious old man made his way down the main road towards the temple, his walking-stick tap-tapping its way along the huge flagstones that lined the roadway, his every tread leaving a trail in the light dusting of fresh snow. It was December 25th, the birth-date of his god-figure and the date of his cult's greatest festival, and hundreds of people were taking the same route to the great temple that cold and frosty morning. The main road through this

well-ordered and wealthy Roman town in the east of the Empire was impressively lined with Corinthian columns, behind which lay busy arcades of shops, selling all manner of trinkets and spices, while the huge columns of the temple at the end of the road seemed to reach up towards the very heavens. Upon entering the gloom of the temple the old man could see very little, but as his eyes grew accustomed to the gloom he could see the great frieze at the back of the temple. There, depicted in the dazzling colours of a grand mosaic, picked out by the darting shards of light from a distant window, was an image of Mithras killing a bull.

It has long been understood that the story of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection is far from unique. There were dozens of dying and resurrecting

gods in the ancient world, most of which predate the biblical epic. In the case of Mithras, his birth date was celebrated as the *Dies Natalis Solis Invicti*, or the 'Birthday of the Unconquered Sun' (Sol Invicta). But this was not simply a birth, it was the resurrection or rebirth of the Sun, for the 25th of December represented the day upon which the position of the rising and setting Sun started to move back towards the north, and thus the days would grow longer and the nights shorter. This was the rebirth of the Sun and the birth of a new year, a cosmological constant that lay behind much of this dying and resurrecting mythology

This is why the birth of Jesus was likewise said to have been on the 25th December, for the new Solar cult was merely inheriting the traditions of

the past. In a similar fashion, the birth of John the Baptist is said to have occurred exactly six months before that of Jesus, a convenient tradition which resulted in John's birth representing the summer solstice while Jesus' birth represented the winter solstice. It is clear, therefore, that the Church of Jesus and John was originally a Solar cult. In addition, the summer solstice was often associated with Osiris (the dying Sun) while the winter solstice was identified with Horus (the reborn Sun), and so the origins of this 'new' religion were ultimately Egyptian. Which is correct because, as we have seen many times previously, Jesus was indeed identified with Horus in the famous Madonna and Child symbology. This is also why John said of Jesus:

John answered and said ... You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the

christ (the king), but that I am sent before him
... He must increase , but I must decrease.
(John 3:27-30)

In cosmological terms, the meaning of John's cryptic message is obvious: at the summer solstice the Sun must begin to decrease, but at the winter solstice the Sun must begin to increase. But this cosmological connection to Osiris (John) and Horus (Jesus) might suggest that John the Baptist was more of a father-figure in this symbolic relationship.*¹

If we now come back to the imagery of the pious old man in his temple, just what or who was Mithras? As ever with these mythical heroes, Mithras was not the invention of the Roman military, who tended to be its primary adherents around the Empire, he was from the east, from Parthia (Persia). Mithras was said to have

been an angel or messenger of Mazda; however, the emphasis on astrology and bullfighting gives us a hint of a much older version of Mithras. The earliest mention of a stellar figure who fought the Bull of Heaven was Gilgamesh, the hero of the world's oldest heroic story. This is generally interpreted as a story about a prince or king of Babylon but, as I pointed out in the book *Jesus*, it is more likely that Gilgamesh was a stellar figure.

Gilgamesh was armed with an axe in one arm and a bow in the other, with a sword buckled to his belt. His task was to kill the Bull of Heaven, but first he had to deal with the dreaded Humbaba, which consisted of 'seven splendors' that blasted out one by one. Taken at face value this is simply a mythical tale of daring deeds by a prince, not unlike the Grail romances

of Medieval literature. However, if Gilgamesh is read on a more literal and lateral level, it will become obvious that this epic is actually a tale of the workings and movements of the heavens, the very wheels of the Cosmos in action.

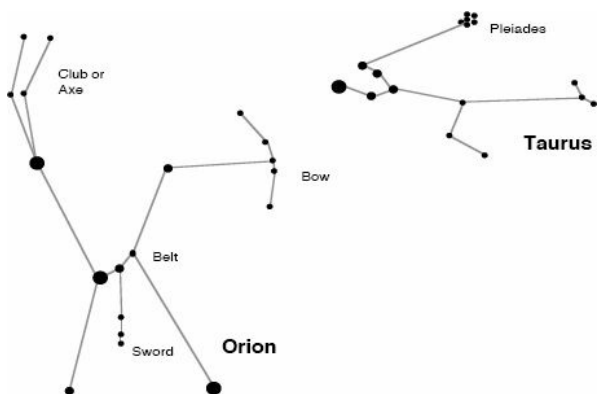



Fig 1.1 Gilgamesh was armed with an axe, bow and sword.

The ancient scribes were not so interested with the intrigues of the

royal court, but they were perennially fascinated with the lives and times of the gods, and in this era the gods were inextricably linked to the heavens above. In truth, Gilgamesh, with his axe, sword and bow, is obviously an image of Orion. The Bull of Heaven was the constellation of Taurus, while the Humbaba was the Pleiades or Seven Sisters, who guard Taurus' neck. The epic of Gilgamesh dates from the early second millennium BC, the precise period during which the precessional era^{*2} of Taurus was eventually superseded by the constellation of Aries, and this is what the epic of Gilgamesh was trying to convey. To those who had 'ears to hear', the higher initiates, Orion was the great warrior and arbiter of the heavens, and as the precessional era of Taurus faded it was Orion's duty to kill

the bull of Taurus and allow Aries to reign supreme. A new 'Great Month'*³ of the Cosmos had just begun.

The imagery of Orion as Gilgamesh was a facet of Babylonian theology, but if we moved slightly westwards we would find alternative appellations for the same characters. In Egypt, Orion was identified with Osiris, the archetypal dying and resurrecting god who became the guardian of the underworld. It was from Osiris (Asar)  that the cult of the dying and resurrecting god spread out across the known world. He became Dionysus in Greece, Attis in Asia Minor, Adonis in Syria, Bacchus in Rome and Mithras in Persia and then Rome.¹ These were gods who predated Jesus by many centuries or even millennia, but were nevertheless much the same in form and deed:

He who will not eat of my body and drink of my blood, so that he shall be made one with me and I with him, the same shall not know salvation.²

This quotation may be familiar, but its source is perhaps unexpected and even troubling to some. In actual fact, this quotation is from the rites of Mithras, and clearly the early Christian Church has absorbed and built upon the earlier rites and liturgy of the Church of Mithras. Christianity is, therefore, largely Pagan; a commonly hurled slur that was originally taken from the Latin *paganus*, which refers to the countryside and implied either a yokel or a nature worshipper. The great New Testament epic of the dying and resurrecting god is therefore an old and hoary tale that was a central component of Pagan and Gnostic mysticism long before the first century

AD and the lives of Jesus and Saul (St Paul). Mysticism it may well be, but is it also history?

Secular history

In contrast to the biblical texts, much of secular history is fairly well known. Alexander the Great, for instance, was one of those seismic characters who completely changed the political structure of Eastern Europe and the Middle East; with vast swathes of these regions being Hellenised for centuries after Alexander's death. Such was the scale of his achievements and the corresponding scale of the commentary on his life, that history has bequeathed us a great legacy of inscriptions, sculptures, mosaics and a complete written biography by Arrian. We know who Alexander was, in great

and intimate detail, and therefore we can be certain of his place in history.

Likewise, Julius Caesar was another of these pivotal characters, whose life changed society as we know it. Julius Caesar not only conquered Gaul (France) and invaded Britain, he also took over the Roman establishment and turned the Republic into an Empire. Without Julius, the great Empire of Rome may never have happened and European history would have been very different. In return, however, Julius Caesar's far-reaching reforms and his grip on power has once more bequeathed us a great legacy of inscriptions, sculptures and mosaics, and once more we have a written biography, supposedly penned by his own hand.

This is how history should be: great leaders who leave their mark on

antiquity and who leave a corresponding legacy in the ancient records. Except that history does not always prove to be quite so obliging. Sometimes, whole civilisations can fade from the historical radar, and one of the most famous of these blank spaces was the Hittites of Anatolia. Although mentioned in the Bible and in the diplomatic correspondence of the Middle East and Egypt, the exact location of this powerful Hittite culture was lost to history. Lost, that is, until excavations at Bogazkoy in central Turkey uncovered similar correspondence; and until the Turkish historian, Bedrich Hrozný, managed to decipher the tablets and demonstrate that the ruins at Bogazkoy were those of the Hittite capital city of Hattusa. Once more, a major aspect of European antiquity had been

discovered, documented, and placed into its correct sequence in the greater historical record.

However, as we have already seen, where history completely fails us is when we start to look at the tanakhical, biblical or koranic records of Egypt and the Near East. Here are texts that are demonstrably ancient and which are known to have been written in this region. These are texts that relate, with some confidence, many of the historical events and historical characters that have been documented in this region, and so we are confident that the authors of these texts knew the politics and the geography of the area, and were conversant on many occasions with the royal courts and political establishments. These were most definitely not the idle scribblings of fools and paupers; they were a

formal record of strategic events, in both the political and religious spheres, of these societies. Indeed, their intimate familiarity with the royal, priestly and political hierarchy of this region would suggest that these were originally the official records of the establishment.

The only problem with this high level of historical detail is that most of the main characters in these same biblical texts, the very heroes whose lives and deeds these texts aim to preserve, are all missing from the historical record. Whether it is Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Saul, David, Solomon, Saul (Paul), Mary, Joseph, John, James, Jesus or indeed, Mary Magdalene, they are all missing from the historical record. How can this be? How is it that all of these influential characters,

who have shaped the lives of billions of people throughout the ages in the Western world, can go missing from the historical record?

As a reflex defence, it is often said that some of these people were poor, and so their history was not recorded due to a lack of resources and education. But that is not necessarily so, for in Genesis 14:14 it is said that Abraham had 318 servants (army officers according to Josephus Flavius), and so it is obvious that Abraham was not quite as poor as the authorities make out. Likewise, Saul, David and Solomon were all kings of Israel and according to these texts they were the most influential monarchs in this region: diplomats and royalty came from all over the known world to pay them homage and tribute (taxes). The kings of the United Monarchy

were influential enough to control the entire political outlook of the Middle East, so it is not unreasonable to have expected them to afford a few scribes to record their great achievements.

This they undoubtedly did, and the result of their endeavours was the books of Kings and Chronicles in the Tanakh, the Judaic Old Testament. However, bearing in mind the great wealth and influence of the United Monarchy of David and Solomon, it is also not unreasonable for us to expect a corresponding mark to be made within the historical record; just as Alexander, Julius Caesar and the princes of Hatti demonstrated is entirely possible. But the Judaeans monarchs are inexplicably missing from the historical record, and not a trace of their great empire has ever been discovered. Finkelstein and

Silberman, two of Israel's foremost archaeologists, recently wrote a review of evidence for biblical events in the known archaeology of Israel. They found virtually nothing to support the biblical accounts, and one review of their chapter on the United Monarchy says:

Archaeology in Jerusalem has failed to produce evidence that (this city) was more than a village at the time of David and Solomon, and monuments once ascribed to Solomon are now linked to other, later kings. Investigation of settlement patterns suggests instead that tenth century Judah held about twenty small villages and a few thousand inhabitants, with no indication of the wealth which could support large armies in the field, nor of the extensive bureaucracy needed to administer a kingdom, let alone an empire.³

This lack of archaeology for the United Monarchy was puzzling, for I could not believe that the entire Tanakh had been

invented by an imaginative scribe, so I began a search for this lost monarchy. The book *Solomon* is a fascinating account of the discovery of kings David and Solomon, including their palaces, temples and tombs. The trick, in this case, was to look in a location other than Judaea.

However, the same kind of historical lacuna is present in the New Testament, where Jesus and his family have somehow managed to escape the quills of contemporary historians. It is often said that the New Testament was an oral history for some time, and this is why much of this history has been lost. But this portrayal of Judaea in the first century AD as an educational backwater is complete nonsense. Although many of the region's records have been lost, we still have a complete history of all of the events

that occurred in this region during the first century AD, courtesy of the first century AD Jewish historian Josephus Flavius, and other commentaries by an assortment of Roman historians. There is no good reason, therefore, for this particular aspect of Judaeian history to be lost to us, and no good reason why Jesus' disciples could not have been taking notes and writing diaries themselves.

We know, for instance, that Saul (St Paul) was writing copious numbers of letters (epistles) to his colleagues in the Church of Jesus and James, and to the new Church of Saul that he had started himself, which he was sending out by post to cities across the Mediterranean. If Saul was in a position to do this – and initially Saul was just a lowly initiate with a big ego within the Church of Jesus and James –

then why did the Church leadership not do the same? Where is the Gospel according to Jesus, Joseph, James, Mary^{*4} or Joseph of Arimathaea?

It is this lack of information, and the corresponding absence of evidence in the historical record, that has led many researchers into believing that both the Old and New Testaments were works of pure fiction – a mythical national identity, created in order to underpin a new religion and a new society. In taking this argument to its ultimate conclusion, Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy wrote *The Jesus Mysteries*, an interesting book that argued that the entire New Testament was therefore all mythology. Since the life of Jesus was based upon a myth, then Jesus himself must also be a myth. In other words, the whole of the New Testament was a figment of Saul's (St

Paul's) imagination, a fairy-story which was dreamed up to line Saul's pockets with gold via the gullibility of the faithful.

Freke and Gandy have a point here, because if you read the extensive jottings of the early Christian writers, like Ignatius, Origen, Clement, Irenaeus and Eusebius, we discover a problem. These theologians wrote copiously about the early Church and its followers and martyrs, but there is generally one character who is missing from their exhaustive accounts – Jesus himself. But why should this be? Are Freke and Gandy correct? Is Jesus a completely mythical figure invented by the clergy to dupe their followers?

Whilst I might agree with some of their analysis, the fact that Jesus' life strongly mimicked the earlier Egyptian and Persian religions and their

mythical resurrecting gods, does not prove that Jesus himself was mythical. What Freke and Gandy fail to understand is that these ancient religions were also dramas – plays that were enacted for the entertainment and education of the disciples and sometimes the laity. But plays need actors, and so the senior priesthood, including Jesus, would have acted out the life of the dying and resurrecting god, just as Masons do today within the Third Degree initiation.

So why, in this case, is there such a deafening silence on the part of the early Church fathers on the life and history of Jesus? Eusebius, for instance, takes solace in the biblical gospels and the bogus paragraph that was inserted into the works of Josephus Flavius at a later date, most probably by Eusebius himself – the

‘Testimonium Flavianum’. ^{J4} The latter is a paragraph about Jesus in the works of Josephus, in an obviously different style, that earlier writers like Origen, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Clement and Justin all appear to have missed. The Testimonium Flavianum is a complete forgery, and yet this is one of Eusebius’ greatest ‘proofs’ for the historical Jesus. Lacking any other history about Jesus, Eusebius goes on to ‘prove’ that Christianity is true because there are so many people who have died for the cause. These early histories of the Church are not much more than a list of martyrs, which were used to beguile the ill-educated proletariat. Christianity must be true, say the Church fathers, otherwise it would not have so many martyrs. As evidence for the life of Jesus goes, this is not much better than a joke.

However, despite the apparent lack of information, I still believe that Jesus really existed. The answer to the 'historical vacuum conundrum' is not that Jesus did not exist, but rather that nobody wanted to acknowledge who Jesus really was. As I have already demonstrated in previous works, Christianity is not the creed of the Church of Jesus and James; instead it was founded by the industrious and deceitful enterprise of Saul (St Paul), and Saul strayed a long way from the original doctrines of Jesus and James. As we shall discover again in later chapters, Saul was not a full initiate into the mystery school of the Church of Jesus and James, and so when he started his new, rival sect he did not understand the complexities of the Gnostic mysteries. Saul simply took the legend of the resurrecting god,

superimposed it upon the life of Jesus, and held it up to the gullible faithful as an icon to be worshipped as a god. As an aside, he demanded money in the collecting plate for absolution from sins, thereby making a tidy profit. And they fell for it too!

The real reason that the life of Jesus disappeared from view, so that even the early Church fathers could not write about him, is that his true life differed greatly from the one that Saul had manufactured and sold to the world. Saul had created a pacifist hero-figure from a poor background, who had championed over adversity and been persecuted by the people. Surprisingly, a sob-story about a lowly and persecuted hero-figure is often appreciated more than an uplifting story about an exalted and victorious champion, and so Saul's Jesus-figure

adopted this modest and browbeaten posture. Islam also successfully plays this 'persecution card' on every conceivable occasion possible, which demonstrates how powerful a strategy victim-hood can be.

However, as I will demonstrate in later chapters, Jesus and Mary Magdalene were not poor and nor were they persecuted by the people of Jerusalem. In fact, they were the richest couple in Judaea; they governed a city-state in Syria; they owned a magnificent palace in Jerusalem; and they controlled a sizeable private army. Jesus was acknowledged by many as the 'Christ', meaning king, which is why a notice to that effect was placed upon his crucifixion cross. He even became High Priest of Jerusalem for a few years in the early AD 60s, as even the New Testament is

forced to acknowledge.

This true history of the life of Jesus is the real reason that Eusebius and the other Church fathers could 'not find' Jesus in the historical record. He was there, of course, and I have no doubt that they saw his life-history in all its splendour and glory, but there was no way in the world that they could reveal it to the general public. The fairy-story of poverty and persecution had already been cast and sold to the people, who believed it word for word, and there was nothing that Eusebius or anyone else could do about that. His only option was to prevaricate about subsidiary matters, such as martyrdom, penitence, trust and faith; and to deliberately falsify a token history for Jesus in the works of Josephus Flavius.

However, the interesting

ramification of this explanation for the life of Jesus is that nobody was able to delete his true history – it still exists in the historical record. This is why I think that Freke and Gandy and other authors of the ‘mythological Jesus theory’ are wrong. As will be explained later, many of Saul’s (St Paul’s) accounts of his own life detail his battles with a fiendish foe who tried to trick and undermine him on many occasions. Saul records that he got the better of this adversary on several occasions and even arrested him once, but he was released by King Agrippa II; but we have to be cautious about Saul’s grandiose claims, as he admits himself that he was fond of boasting. So who was this great adversary of Saul-Paul, who occupies great swathes of his copious jottings? Actually, he was called Jesus, a figure

who I will comprehensively demonstrate to have been the biblical Jesus.

This is the rich, powerful, aristocratic and princely Jesus, the Jesus with palaces, riches, castles and a private army, who we shall discover in later chapters. This is the Jesus who sought to bring war to the east, in order that he might take the throne of Judaea and thence the throne of Rome itself. Emperor Jesus – it has a certain ring to it. As Jesus said:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

B5

In the book *Cleopatra* I attempted to follow this alternative ancestry of Jesus, and the results strongly pointed towards him being an Egypto-Persian (Egypto-Parthian) prince whose family

were exiled to Syrio-Jordan in about AD 4 – an exiled and impoverished royal family who were wandering through Syrio-Jordan looking for suitable accommodation, however mean and lowly, just as the New Testament claims. However, this scenario may not be entirely correct, for this royal family may well have left Parthia with half the national treasury: a golden good-bye of epic proportions. The reference to a birth in a ‘stable’ may actually have been allegorical, as we shall see, for this royal family were far from poor, even in exile – although it is entirely probable that more lowly accommodation sufficed until the new palace could be built.

In my estimation, Jesus was a royal prince in exile, a legitimate claimant to the thrones of Egypt and Persia (and Rome), if only he could

establish and realise that claim. The kingdoms his family did eventually establish were called the Kingdoms of Bethanya and Aurania (the Kingdom of Heaven), a province that lies to the east of the rivers Jordan and Orontes. The capital of this new micro-state was the city of Palmyra in eastern Syria, while another city lay further south at Gamala (Umm el-Jimal) just to the east of Amman in eastern Jordan. These two cities were granted to these exiles if they promised to protect Judaeo-Israel's (and Rome's) eastern borders with Parthia, which they achieved with their much-feared mounted archers. These were warriors from the Parthian homelands in northeastern Iran, the forerunners of the murderous horsemen of Ghengis Khan, whose ability to strike at will and fire on the move outpaced and

outmanoeuvred the static infantry of Judaea and Parthia alike.

Thus Jesus controlled a small nation that ran north-south, through the eastern desert regions adjoining Syria and Jordan; an unpromising strip of real-estate that began to blossom due to its tax-free status. It is because of this small kingdom and because of the intention to expand it westwards, that Jesus said to his twelve disciples, at the Last Supper Table:

And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my father has appointed unto me. That you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. [B6](#)

This was not a spiritual abode of a heavenly father that Jesus spoke of, this was a *pater πατηρ* (a human father) and the inheritance of a *basileia βασιλεια* (an Earthly, royal kingdom).

Confusion has arisen (perhaps deliberately so) because the 'Kingdom of Aurania' does indeed mean the 'Kingdom of Heaven'. However, the fundamental basis of this name was not the heavens above, but the name of the queen who established this city-state, who was called Queen Thea Muse Ourania. Jesus was born with a golden spoon in his mouth, even if the exile of his family to Syria meant that he was born in somewhat lowlier surroundings than the family had been used to in Parthia.

If all of this is true, then there may well be good historical evidence for many of the biblical events and characters; but one just has to think more laterally in order to find them. In fact, much of the evidence I have uncovered is to be found in Egypt and Syria, rather than Judaeo-Israel.

Nag Hammadi

It is even possible that there was a Gospel of Jesus, once upon a time, but that we have managed to somehow lose that particular scroll. The evidence for this lies in the recent discovery of one or two of these lost gospels, which have turned up within the Nag Hammadi collection and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Here we find the Gospels of Thomas, Philip and Mary Magdalene, and if these disciples could put quill to parchment, then surely Jesus and James could have done likewise. (It is entirely possible that these particular gospels from the Nag Hammadi collection are third-hand and from a later era, as they contain very little real history and concentrate instead on beliefs and conversations.)

Indeed, James and Jesus could, and probably did, write their life histories, and evidence for the Gospel of Jesus will be demonstrated later; but their efforts were to be in vain because these texts were not chosen to be included in the new, evolving holy book. In fact, it is highly probable that any surviving copies were hunted down and ruthlessly destroyed, because they contradicted the orthodox gospels to such a degree that even the life of Jesus himself had become a Christian heresy! So how did the four canonical gospels enter the New Testament – along with Acts of the Apostles and twenty-one letters (epistles) that were mostly penned by Saul (St Paul) – while the gospels of Thomas, Philip, Mary, James and Jesus were relegated to the garbage tip? The answer has to be that there was a

systematic sorting and editing of these texts during the early part of the new Christian Church's existence. But who was responsible for this?

There are two primary suspects in this theological intrigue: Saul (St Paul) and Emperor Constantine. The first of these suspects will be dealt with later, but some background information is required to explain the latter.

Rome had two emperors during the early part of the fourth century AD, and Constantine had inadvisably precipitated a civil war against his rival emperor, Licinius. As with all wars, and especially civil wars, political necessity generates unlikely bedfellows; and Constantine's new partner under this political duvet was the emerging creed of Christianity. Having won control of, and stabilised,

the empire in the early part of the fourth century AD, Constantine then discovered that his Christian allies were more divided than the empire had ever been. The solution to this instability was the Council of Nicaea, which was convened in AD 325 and told to produce a common creed, or else! Not surprisingly, agreement was found and some rival sects – like Arianism, which denied the divinity of Jesus – were abandoned by the wayside. It was probably at this juncture, with the persecution of alternative creeds, that the Nag Hammadi texts were buried in Egypt.

However, even within the Nag Hammadi scrolls, which are very early texts for Christian history, we still find that most of the accounts are incredibly nebulous and imprecise. If one reads Josephus, Strabo, Manetho or even the

Clementine Recognitions, one is immediately struck by the wealth of useful historical information that they contain. Yet, upon reading the assorted 'gospels' from the Nag Hammadi hoard, one is struck by the banality of it all, with real historical or social information being almost entirely missing. Some will say that this is because these are religious texts, rather than secular accounts, but the Old Testament is likewise deemed to be religious and yet it still packs a great deal of (supposedly historical) information per page.

In my estimation, there is another factor in the dilution of these gospels that has not been explored in nearly enough detail, and that is the nature and agenda of the original compiler of many of these texts; for it is highly likely that the same individual was

responsible for the missing history, the missing characters and for many of the missing texts themselves. The reason that this is possible, even likely, is that Christianity has nothing to do with the Church of Jesus and James.

The Church of Jesus and James was a new sect of Judaism that sprang up in the early part of the first century AD. The New Testament likes to suggest that Jesus was the originator of this new sect, perhaps with some assistance from John the Baptist, but this notion is far removed from the truth. It has already been demonstrated in the books *Tempest & Exodus* and *Eden in Egypt* that many of the quotes and teachings of Jesus came from earlier religions that flourished in this region. In fact, many of these adages and axioms were Egyptian in origin. Large sections of Jesus' Sermon on the

Mount, for instance, came from the *Maxims of Ani*, as did the Lord's Prayer. Much of Proverbs came from the *Instructions of Amenemopet*, while elements of Psalms came from the *Hymn to the Aten*.

Furthermore, there are many elements within the Church of Jesus and James, including the names of these brothers, that identifies this Church as being what Josephus Flavius called the 'Fourth Sect' of Judaism. (The other three sects being the Pharisees, Sadducees and the Essene.) The reasons why the Church of Jesus and James should be closely equated with the Fourth Sect is explored in more detail in the book *Cleopatra to Christ*, but the outcome of this association means that it is highly likely that the biblical Jesus was actually the historical character called

Jesus of Gamala (or Jesus of Sapphias).

Both Josephus and Hegesippus called this Fourth Sect the 'Galilean Sect'. This was, in part, because the founder of the sect was called Judas the Galilean (also called Judas the Gaulonite and Judas of Gamala). It is always assumed that this term refers to the Sea of Galilee, because leaders of this sect were also governors of Tiberias which lies on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. However, this may only be part of the story, for *galilee* γαλιλαί also means 'circle' or 'revolution' (from the Hebrew *galiyl* גליל), and so the Galileans may have been called revolutionaries in the same way that we understand the modern term. And revolutionaries they certainly were.

Simple Judaism

During the AD 60s these revolutionary members of the Galilean Sect (the Fourth Sect) had a great problem, in that they were being persecuted by Saul (St Paul). The New Testament is strangely silent on how Saul (St Paul) was able to arrest and imprison members of the Galilean Sect, and under what jurisdiction he was working. But this is a very important question and Murphy O'Connor says of this conundrum:

Nothing in his letters suggests that Paul had any official standing in his treatment of Christians ... Hence, in opposition to what (Acts) says, he could not have used arrest, torture or imprisonment as a means of forcing Christians to recognize that they had been misled.⁷

But use arrest and imprisonment he

evidently did, and yet this seemingly insignificant detail was the route towards eventually discovering the true identity of Saul (St Paul): for it became apparent that he was actually the Judaeen army officer in command of Galilee. The New Testament indicates that the Galileans were being persecuted for teachings incompatible with classical Judaism, but it is also likely that they fell foul of the Judaeen authorities over the nonpayment of taxes. But, just as events were reaching a peak, Saul, the persecutor of this new Judaic sect, had a sudden flash of inspiration on the road to 'Damascus'; which resulted in a complete change of heart and a request to join the Galileans.

Bearing in mind Saul's previous persecution, the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James (Jesus was probably still

alive at this point in time) were still fearful of Saul, who had now adopted the name of Paul (St Paul). This trepidation resulted in Saul's progression through the ranks and initiations of the Galilean Sect being rather slower than he had anticipated. In addition, Saul was all for teaching this new Judaic creed to the Gentiles, the non-Jews, a policy that again led to tensions with James and the other leaders of the Galileans.

Incensed by this deliberate prevarication and opposition to his suggestions for reform, Saul eventually decided that he would be much better off if he set up his own Church. Saul could see that there were more Gentiles than Jews within the Roman Empire and he could also see that if entry to the Church was made easier there would be larger congregations —

and larger congregations meant more donations. To that end, Saul went his own way; he scrapped most of Mosaic law, those hundreds of confusing prohibitions in the Book of Leviticus, and replaced them with the Ten Commandments. He abolished all the strange dietary prohibitions that separated Jews from Romans socially, and simply instructed these new Gentile followers to ‘abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, and strangled animals’. Black pudding may have been forbidden, but the bacon sandwich was apparently back on the breakfast menu.

Saul also scrapped all the confusing Judaic rules about marriage and procreation, and said instead ‘avoid sexual immorality’. But this simplified law left a great deal of latitude in the interpretation, and Saul

was forced to chastise his followers for being rather too liberal in their understanding of this edict:

It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and such immorality as is not even among the heathen – that a man has taken his father's wife! [B8](#)

His 'father's wife' being his mother, a convoluted turn of phrase that is surprisingly common in the both the New Testament and Josephus' *Jewish War* to describe incest, a consanguinity custom that was far more common in these times than theologians would like to admit.

Circumcision was another of the great shibboleths of the Jews, a central pillar of the creed, and no true male Jew is complete (sic) without being circumcised. Yet Saul sought to end this tradition too. One can see his logic

here, for Jews are generally circumcised soon after birth or during the *bar mitsvah* ‘coming of age’ celebration, and so the unfortunate victim does not have much say about whether he wants the procedure or not. However, Saul was preaching and converting adult Gentiles, and so one can see why there was a great deal of resistance from these new recruits to getting circumcised as an adult – especially bearing in mind the lack of anesthetics and the prevalence of disease and inflammation that a simple cut could generate in this era. So opposed did Saul become to this ancient Judaic (and Egyptian) tradition, that he said that if Jews were so wedded to this custom, then why did they not just cut off the whole penis and have done with it!

And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision,

why do I still suffer persecution? ... I would they cut off that which troubles you. [B9](#)

Some readers have doubted my interpretation of this verse in Galatians, since I first made this assertion in the book *Jesus, Last of the Pharaohs*. However, Professor Robert Eisenman says exactly the same thing of this verse:

This mounts into a crescendo, as he airs this problem in the next few chapters ... ‘so your enemy ... throwing you into confusion would cut themselves off’ – having the dual meaning of throwing themselves out of the movement, but also ‘cut’ off their own sexual members.[10](#)

This opposition to circumcision is why Christians today are not circumcised. If Christianity had been descended from the Church of Jesus (the Galileans) Christians today would be circumcised, and the fact they are not demonstrates that this new creed was

devised by Saul and not Jesus. Saul's new sect was not simply radical in many respects, it was also Judaism without the drudgery; a route to the sacred without the servile slavery. In every respect it was Judaism made simple for the Gentile masses, and so this book will often refer to this new creed of Saul as being 'Simple Judaism'.

These new simple rules for the Gentiles also allowed for a greater sense of belonging. Previously, the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James had said:

And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the corners of the avenues, in order that men may see them ... But you, when you pray, go into your own room and shut your door; pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. [B11](#)

Such a teaching was not only in line with first century AD Judaic teaching, where there was only supposed to be one Judaic Temple, it was also in line with ancient Egyptian theology. In Egypt, the temples were more like monasteries – temples for the professional priesthood. The layman gave tithes (taxes) to the temple and it was the professional priesthood who conversed with the gods on their behalf, and ensured the fertility of the people and the lands. This was the message that Jesus was trying to convey in this verse.

However, Saul, having visited the great temples of the Greek world, had seen a more profitable future. This was no longer going to be the Judaic Temple and the Judaic god, it was going to be *my* church and *my* god. Involve the people, and they become

more enthusiastic; and the more people you can cram into a temple, and the more you let them converse personally with the gods, the more likely they are to throw a few more shekels in the collecting plate. Saul had discovered a cash-cow, and he was milking it for everything it was worth.

However, this was not going to be the inclusive, open, welcoming, politically-correct Church of the twenty-first century; Saul's Church was to be even more aggressive and exclusive than the fire-and-brimstone Church of the Victorian era, and perverts of any shade or colour were not to be admitted. The list of those that were excluded from Saul's Kingdom of Heaven included:

Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor

thieves, nor greedy, nor drunkards, nor critics, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. [B12](#)

Actually this list requires a little translation, for Saul was being a little more basal than the rapidly blanching translators of the King James Bible, who had to deal with all this bombastic material, cared to admit. The translations of *malakos* μαλακος (effeminate) and *arsenkoite* αρσενικοιτης (abusers of themselves) are particularly suspect, and a better translation of this verse might be:

You should know that the deceitful shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Do not be deceived: neither prostitutes, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor rent boys, nor men-fuckers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

As the venerable theologian Adam

Smith reports:

Several of the evils here enumerated will not bear to be particularly explained; they are, however, sufficiently plain of themselves, and show us what abominations were commonly practised among the Corinthians.¹³

The Corinthians were obviously a rum lot, not adverse to pleasures of the flesh, and Saul was a plain-speaking evangelist who was having nothing to do with it. This is what Saul, the inventor of Simple Judaism (Christianity), decreed, but modern Christianity now disagrees vehemently with its founding father. Indeed, the majority of Catholic priests are now to be found among the list of those who were supposed to be excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven. Perhaps Saul should have mentioned 'choir boys' rather than 'rent boys'.

The unfortunate thing about this

new perspective on biblical history is that Saul's Simple Judaism was the winner in this battle of the creeds, while the more demanding and more enlightened Galilean Sect of Jesus and James sunk into obscurity. Simple Judaism (Christianity) is, therefore, the legacy and teachings of Saul, not the creed of Jesus and James; which is why Europe is dotted with thousands of churches and cathedrals for the laity to attend, rather than a few huge temples within which a professional priesthood can take care of the people's religious needs. Thus all Christians, since the time of Saul onwards, have been cheerfully and dedicatedly following the wrong Church and the wrong teachings; and all of this is being performed in the name of Jesus of Gamala, who would be turning in his grave at this sad state

of affairs. As the nineteenth century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche said:

Saul killed the Christianity of Jesus and replaced it with a counterfeit version of the gospel, a vision of hatred produced in the fetid confines of a Pharisaic mind.¹⁶

Pseudonym

Christianity is the Church of Saul, and not the Galilean Church of Jesus and James, that is for sure. However, having identified this as being the real origin of the Christian Church, one very important question remains: who was Saul (St Paul)? Unfortunately, we here find another of those hugely influential characters from biblical history who have infuriatingly been deleted from the historical record. Saul, the inventor and promotor of

Simple Judaism (Christianity), one of the largest religions the world has ever seen, and he manages to somehow escape the quills of the many historians who were active during his lifetime.

Here is Saul, the evangelist who was both praised and hated in equal measure; the author who perhaps penned hundreds of letters and sent them all over the Mediterranean; the criminal who was nevertheless regularly consulted by the Roman procurators of Judaea; the toast of society who was wined and dined by King Agrippa and his sister Berenice; the 'Christian' who was in Rome when Nero initiated his pogrom against Christians; and yet somehow this hugely influential character is never mentioned in history. How is this possible? One might have thought that this Judaeo-Christian agitator, who

was supposedly a leader of those who caused the disturbances in Rome during Nero's reign, might have got a mention somewhere in the Imperial records, but Tacitus does not mention him, nor Pliny or Suetonius. Not even Josephus, with his extensive history of Judaea, gives him so much as a sentence.

So how did all of this happen? How did Saul and Jesus, and the rest of the biblical family, escape the long tentacles of the historical record? We have already seen that some researchers believe that Jesus and the majority of the New Testament accounts are largely fictional; and while this is possible, it is not the line that this book will be pursuing. Had the New Testament authors been starting with a blank parchment and making up a completely fictional story, they could

have done a great deal better than the gospels we are presented with. We are supposed to be witnessing the life of a virtuous, godly individual, who was supposed to have led an exemplary life as a role model for the rest of humanity. That is the story that is preached from the pulpit, but it is not the story of the New Testament:

A Greek woman whose little daughter was possessed by an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at Jesus' feet, and again and again she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 'Let the children be filled first,' Jesus said to her. 'It is unseemly to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.' 'True, Master,' she answered, 'but the dogs under the table do pick up the children's crumbs.'^{B17}

Here Jesus calls a woman a 'dog', because she was Greek and not a Jew. Remember that the Galileans were a Jewish sect and only Jews were

allowed to join, and so in modern terms Jesus was an ultranationalist and a racist. It was Saul who had begun the process of opening up the Church to Gentiles and clearly this was not a policy that Jesus agreed with. In addition, this saying goes a little deeper than it may at first seem, for 'bread' in New Testament terms refers to knowledge, while the 'children' actually refers to the disciples. See *Jesus, Last of the Pharaohs* for a deeper analysis of this verse.

The conundrum of the fictional hero-figure who does not fit the reality of the New Testament continues, however, for Jesus is also reported to have been a reluctant hero who has a volatile nature, and tends to get rather angry:

And hearing, those with him went out to take hold of Jesus; for they said, he (Jesus) is

insane. [B18](#)

And many of them said, Jesus has a demon and is insane. Why do you hear him? [B19](#)

And the Son of Man (Jesus) came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!' [B20](#)

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I am not come to send peace, but a sword. [B21](#)

Then said Jesus unto them, But now, he that has a purse, let him take it, and likewise his wallet, and he that has none (no money), let him sell his garment, and buy a sword. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough. [B22](#)

Some Bibles indicate that Jesus was not necessarily insane but actually 'beside himself' (angry), because the crowd were pressing against him so. Likewise, some translate the tax-gatherers as being 'publicans', but since the primary dispute between

Jesus' Galileans and the Jerusalem authorities was over taxes, I think the former is the more reliable translation (a tax-collector is a *publicanus* in Latin). Finally, we also have direct evidence that Jesus was not simply a peaceful revolutionary in the mould of Mahatma Gandhi, but a warlike revolutionary in the likeness of Che Guevara. More evidence for this will be explored in later chapters.

Here we can see an alternative side of Jesus that does not make a great deal of sense in terms of a peaceful, mythical hero-figure. If you were setting out to create a new religion with a mythical hero-figure who was pure in heart and deeds, you could do a great deal better than creating the Jesus character who is central to the creed of Simple Judaism (Christianity). Instead, the New Testament reads more like a

true life-story of Jesus and his family, with various embellishments and deletions being made to the text at a later date. That, I believe, is exactly what has happened here.

This again implies that someone was in a position to change the texts and create a sanitised version of the life of Jesus, and it was not simply Emperor Constantine and the Catholic priesthood who were in a position to do this. Since the Church of Simple Judaism was created by Saul (St Paul), and not Jesus, that other someone is likely to have been Saul himself. This suggestion brings us back to the true historical identity of Saul, and the immediate suspicion has to be that 'Saul' was not this character's real name. But Saul, being a vainglorious kind of character who was not slow to boast about his great life and deeds, is

unlikely to have covered his tracks by using a pseudonym unless there was a very good reason for doing so – something that he felt threatened his position or his life.

Saul does indeed refer to a number of beatings and stonings he received during his travels, because of his determination to change both orthodox and also Jesus' revolutionary form of Judaism into his new brand of Simple Judaism. Saul's life had been threatened by many people and factions, including the Judaeen priesthood and Roman procurators. His later life among the Romans and Jews of the Empire may also have been a factor in this concealment, because Saul (St Paul) would hardly want to advertise that he had once been a member of the revolutionary faction that started the Jewish War and which

led to the destruction of Jerusalem. So there were many reasons why he would have decided to hide behind a pseudonym – just as he had already changed his name from Saul to Paul. But if Saul is merely another pseudonym, then who was he in reality? Does the man who created Christianity really exist? Can we find him in the historical record?

With the name ‘Saul’ most probably being a pseudonym, the task ahead was not to look for similar appellations, but instead to look for similar deeds and life histories. What I was looking for was a historical character whose life seemed to parallel the life of Saul in a remarkable fashion, and after much foraging through many a turgid text I discovered just such an individual. As an introduction to this momentous

discovery, here are some of the similarities that exist between the life of the biblical Saul and the life of the character from history who mimics Saul's every move:

Saul revealed

The New Testament Saul:

a. He was a Jew of Tarsus. [B30](#)

b. He was raised in Jerusalem. [B31](#)

c. He had Roman citizenship. [B32](#)

d. He was educated as a Pharisee. [B33](#)

e. He became a rabbi. [B34](#)

f. He acted with the Romans against the revolutionaries in the country (the

The first century historical 'Saul':

a. He was a Maccabean Jew. [J50](#)

b. He was raised in Jerusalem. [J51](#)

c. He became a Roman citizen. [J52](#)

d. He was educated as a Pharisee. [J53](#)

e. He became a rabbi. [J54](#)

f. He was against the revolutionaries in the country, persecuting and imprisoning them. His

Nazarenes), pursuing them around Galilee, persecuting and imprisoning their followers. [B35](#) It is not mentioned under what jurisdiction he imprisoned people.

g. He had a vision of a man (Jesus) telling him the error of his ways. Subsequently he turned to the side of the rebels. [B36](#)

h. Directly after this vision, a disciple called Ananias was sent to see Saul in Damascus. Knowing of Saul's previous intention to capture the disciples, Ananias was wary of him, but he was eventually persuaded that Saul was their ally. [B37](#)

i. Saul was accused of being an Egyptian

task, as the appointed general to the province of Galilee, was to 'induce the hotheads to lay down their arms'. [J55](#)

g. He had a vision of a man telling him the error of his ways. Subsequently, he turned to the side of the Romans. [J56](#)

h. Directly after this vision, Ananus the high priest sent an emissary to see this character. Knowing of his duplicity, the priesthood were wary of him. Ananus was not persuaded that he was now their ally, and he was not persuaded to return to Jerusalem where he could be dealt with. [J57](#)

i. He wrote of an Egyptian False Prophet,

False Prophet. (It is likely that Saul was being mistaken for Jesus here, Jesus being an Egyptian pharaoh in exile.

There is more evidence for this later.) [B38](#)

j. Saul spoke both Greek and Aramaic, but Greek was his native language. [B39](#)

k. Saul travelled widely in Europe and returned to Jerusalem. [B40](#)

l. Saul was stoned by his opponents and left for dead. [B41](#)

m. The Jews wished once more to kill Saul, finding him in the Temple of Jerusalem and beating him severely. But Saul was captured (saved) by

who tried to take Jerusalem by force. [J58](#)

j. He spoke both Greek and Aramaic, but Greek was his native language. [J59](#)

k. He travelled widely in Europe and returned to Jerusalem. [J60](#)

l. He was attacked and stoned by his opponents on many occasions. [J61](#)

m. The Jews wished once more to kill this character, but he evaded them. Eventually, he was captured (saved) by the Romans. [J62](#)

the Romans. [B42](#)

n. Saul was sent before Felix and then Festus, the governors of Judaea, accused of being a leader of the Nazarene, a rebel and causing riots in the Temple of Jerusalem. Because of his connections, Saul was held only under a loose house arrest. [B43](#)

o. Felix, in a more secular move, hoped to get a large bribe from Saul and so he was lenient with him. [B44](#)

p. Saul talked with Agrippa and Berenice, the king's sister, and secured favourable treatment. [B45](#)

q. Saul sailed to Rome under the

n. He gave a good account of the disturbances at the Temple of Jerusalem, which were caused by Sicarii assassins murdering their opponents and religious revolutionaries who promised 'freedom'. Remember that Sicarii and Zealots numbered among Jesus' disciples. [J63](#)

o. Florus, the governor in this account, was accused of asking for bribes in order to release prisoners. [J64](#)

p. He gave an account of the petitions that Berenice, King Agrippa's sister, made to Florus, begging him to spare the Jews. [J65](#)

q. He sailed to Rome. [J66](#)

‘protection’ of the
Romans. [B46](#)

r. The ship was
wrecked off Malta
and Saul had to swim
for his life. Later, he
was taken on another
ship to Puteoli (near
present-day Naples).
[B47](#)

s. In Rome, Saul
wrote many letters to
the Christian
communities around
Europe, promoting
the New Testament
texts and vouching
for their authenticity.

t. The ‘publisher’ of
Saul’s works in Rome
was Epaphroditus,
secretary to
emperors Nero and
Domitian. [B48](#)

r. This character was
also shipwrecked, while
taking a band of priestly
prisoners to Rome for
trial. He swam all night,
finally being saved by
another ship and taken to
Puteoli (near present-day
Naples). [J67](#)

s. In Rome, he wrote no
less than 60 letters to
communities around
Europe, recommending
his books and vouching
for their truthfulness. [J68](#)

t. The ‘publisher’ of his
works in Rome was
Epaphroditus, secretary
to emperors Nero and
Domitian. [J69](#)

Such a long list of equivalences between two ‘entirely different’ individuals would be hard to observe, even between identical twins. Just what are the chances that two Jewish priests, who were both Roman citizens, get shipwrecked *en-route* to Rome, and both end up writing letters to people across the Mediterranean through the offices of the same ‘publisher’? The chances are one in millions, which is why I don't think that this is what happened. Clearly, the better odds lie with the possibility that these were not two seemingly identical characters, but just one person, and that is why these two life-stories appear to be so similar.

So, who was this alter-ego of the biblical Saul (St Paul), this shadow-like pseudonym whose life followed that of Saul in an identical fashion?

Was it someone very obscure who has never been studied in depth before? Have I stumbled upon an ancient manuscript that has never before been translated? Not so. In fact, the pseudonym for Saul was none other than Josephus Flavius, the first century Jewish historian who has been mentioned on many occasions already in this book. Is it not amazing that this similarity between the life of Josephus and that of Saul has not been commented on before, except in my books?

Somehow, I cannot believe that this similarity has not been seen previously, especially the glaring similarity between the two shipwrecks. In fact, William Whiston, the eighteenth century translator of Josephus' works, compares the two shipwrecks in detail and comments on how much larger

Josephus' ship must have been to that of Saul's. (Josephus has predictably exaggerated the details, giving 600 against 300 people.) Whiston makes no further remark on the glaring similarities between the two stories, yet how many priestly Jewish prisoners were shipwrecked between AD 60 and AD 65, whilst in transit to Rome, and then taken aboard another ship to Puteoli (Naples) and thence to Rome?

In my estimation, it is not the historical association between Saul and Josephus that has prevented this idea of character amalgamation being taken seriously; it is the theological implications that come with that association that make it highly unpalatable. As we shall see, the idea of Saul being Josephus Flavius brings with it some thorny theological

problems, especially regarding the chronology of Jesus' mission in Judaea. Nevertheless, this very novel theory does explain some interesting theological puzzles.

It explains, for instance, the strange point at which the Acts of the Apostles ends. Acts takes us from the (supposed) crucifixion of Jesus (c. AD 33) to the start of the Jewish rebellion (c. AD 65). It is inconceivable that a commentator like Saul, who was following the history of a radical Jewish sect in Judaea, should have stopped his narration at this point in time (I am assuming here that much of Acts, especially what is known as the 'I' section, was penned by Saul). The Jewish rebellion was the biggest event of the era: all the Jewish sects were involved and passions were running at fever pitch. The sects eventually took

their respective sides in what became a Jewish civil war, with Jew fighting Jew as much as they were fighting the Romans. After picking off the smaller towns one by one, the Romans eventually surrounded Jerusalem; yet, the religious factions within the besieged city of Jerusalem were still slaughtering one another in the temple precinct, while outside, the Romans tried to scale the walls of the city. It was a terrible and tragic time of great passion, public hatred, anger, mass slaughter, wanton deprivation and eventual exile for the people of Jerusalem.

Would a reporter shy away from such an event? Would a man like Saul, who turned every misfortune to his advantage, not wish to give his side of this great story? Of course he would – and he did – but in the guise of

Josephus Flavius, not Saul. The great work that detailed the destruction of Jerusalem was known as *The Jewish War*, and with its publication Saul-Josephus managed to contort his true position of Jewish traitor and quisling for the Romans into a glorious victory for himself. Like his alter-ego Saul, Josephus Flavius was a man who could change sides twice in the conflict and brazenly profess that perfidy was a virtue.

In turn, this theory also explains the way in which Josephus' writings are presented. He managed to write an entire personal version of the Old Testament, much of



Fig 1.2 A

which drew on
original but
alternative texts
that he discovered
in the ruins of the

*sculpture
thought to be of
Saul- Josephus
Flavius.*

great Temple after the fall of
Jerusalem. It is clear that Josephus was
deeply interested in the history of the
Jewish nation, a subject which is
intimately entwined with the religion
of the nation. Josephus was a man who
followed closely in the footsteps of the
Galilean Church of Jesus and James;
he was conversant with the ways of the
Essene; he lived in Galilee at the same
time as the disciples; and he owned
lands in Judaea. Yet for some reason
he apparently did not know or write
anything about the biblical Jesus. (As
mentioned previously, the one
paragraph that specifically mentions
Jesus is obviously a later

interpolation.)

It has been suggested that the Galileans of Jesus and James may have been a small faction in the wider ferment of the religious turmoil of Judaea, and so it may be argued that Josephus had not heard of it. But Josephus was appointed as the army commander in charge of Galilee and Gamala, and in his policing of these regions he made many campaigns to the towns of Tiberias, Jotapata and Sepphoris and Gamala. How could a man, who was effectively the chief of police in the region where Jesus lived, not know of and write about Jesus, his disciples, or his revolutionary faction of Galilean Jews?

The answer is that Josephus *did* know of Jesus and his followers, but he has used slightly different names for these characters in the two versions of

the history of Judaea that he wrote. In the New Testament texts Jesus was simply called Jesus, the leader of the Nazarene sect. In Josephus' books, known as *The Jewish War* and *Life*, the same character was called Jesus of Gamala and he was the leader of the Galilean Sect of Judaism. Like the Nazarene sect, the Galileans were a revolutionary faction of Judaism based in Galilee and the province of Auranania, which lies to the east of the river Jordan and east of Yam Kinneret (the Sea of Galilee).

Josephus and Gamala

As can be seen, this simple association between Saul and Josephus has dramatic implications, for it means that it is highly likely that the biblical Jesus does indeed appear in the historical

record. In the accounts of Josephus Flavius he was called Jesus of Gamala, and he was the governor of Tiberias and the leader of 600 rebel 'fishermen'.

It should be noted here that Josephus Flavius actually had two or three adversaries and, strangely enough, two of these were called Jesus. One was known as Jesus of Gamala while the other was called Jesus son of Sapphias, and it will be my continual contention that these are one and the same person, for they are regularly mentioned in relation to the same locations and events. Perhaps it is worth reviewing the circumstances in which these two characters are mentioned.

The first thing to note is that the title 'Gamala' is confusing in itself, with the Penguin Classics version of

Josephus insisting that the title should always be translated as 'Gamaliel', while William Whiston gives both 'Gamala' and 'Gamaliel'. This slight confusion has the effect of masking the fact that the brother of Jesus of Gamala was Simon of Gamala (Simon of Gamaliel). Of course, the brother of the biblical Jesus was also called Simon, which is just one small indication of a link between these 'two' Jesuses and their biblical equivalent.

It should also be noted that the Penguin Classics translation has continually translated 'Jesus' (of Gamala) as 'Joshua' (of Gamala) in order to, quote, 'return the Greek names to their original Hebrew'. Apart from the uncertainty over the true origins of Jesus' name, which may have been Egypto-Greco-Persian

anyway, the use of the name 'Joshua' neatly diverts the reader's attention away from any possible links between Jesus of Gamala, Jesus of Sapphias and the biblical Jesus himself. This was, no doubt, the primary reason for this change in nomenclature.

Looking further into the texts, the Jesus who set the palace of Herod on fire was Jesus son of Sapphias. [J75](#) [J76](#) It was also Jesus Sapphias who questioned Josephus about the subsequent 'looting' of this same palace, and he was joined in this interrogation by Ananias and John. [J77](#) (Jesus the Magistrate being Jesus Sapphias.*5) [J78](#) However, the primary compatriot of John and Ananus was actually Jesus of Gamala. [J79](#) All of which suggests that Jesus of Gamala and Jesus of Sapphias were the same person.

Looking at another section within these texts, we find that Jesus of Gamala is said to have been at a conference in Jerusalem and he sent word to Josephus Flavius about the order for his arrest. But the army commander at this conference, who was detailed to arrest Josephus Flavius, was actually Jesus of Sapphias, who had a force of 600 cavalry. It would therefore appear that Josephus was forewarned by the very man who was sent to arrest him; but such was the politics of this era that this is entirely possible.

In addition, Jesus of Gamala was most probably the son of Judas of Gamala, the original leader of the Galilean Sect (the Fourth Sect). But Judas of Gamala was also called Judas the Galilean, in which case Jesus would also have been called Jesus the

Galilean. ^{J80} However, Jesus of Sapphias was said to have been the governor of Tiberias, the largest of the towns on the Sea of Galilee. In which case, both Jesus of Gamala and Jesus of Sapphias would have been known as Jesus the Galilean.

Incidentally, the sons of Judas of Gamala also included a Jesus, a James and a Simon, and these also happen to be the names of the brothers of the biblical Jesus. ^{JB81} Likewise, Jesus of Sapphias was also noted for carrying a copy of the laws of Moses with him, while fomenting revolution and sedition in Judaea and Galilee, a habit and an intention that again strongly links this Jesus with the biblical Jesus. ^{J82}

All in all, the available evidence strongly links the 'two' Jesuses in the works of Josephus Flavius (Gamala

and Sapphias) as being the same individual, and more evidence for this will be forthcoming later. In summary, however, it is said of this Jesus that he was a Galilean from Gamala, a leader of rebel fishermen, a priest, a carrier of the law of Moses, the brother of Simon and James, a rebel, the son of Sapphias (the blue lady), and an adversary of Josephus Flavius (Saul-Paul); all of which strongly suggests that this Jesus of Gamala-Sapphias was the biblical Jesus.

Professor Eisenman, in his vast tome *James, the Brother of Jesus*, inadvertently confirms this, but somehow he cannot bring himself to say that Jesus was actually Jesus of Gamala. Presumably, his reluctance to take this analysis to its ultimate conclusion, a repetitive trait for Eisenman, is because the dates do not

match at all – well, not if one is wedded to the idea that Jesus died in AD 33. Eisenman says of the Galilean sect of Judas of Gamala (the father of Jesus of Gamala):

This movement, according to Josephus, ‘led our people to destruction’ ... As I have suggested, there can be little doubt that what he is describing is the Messianic Movement (of Jesus) in Palestine.⁸³

But if the Galilean Sect (of Jesus of Gamala) and the Messianic Movement (of Jesus) were one and the same, and if both of their leaders were called Jesus, then surely the biblical Jesus must be Jesus of Gamala? There is still the problem of the differing dates, of course, a problem that Professor Eisenman continually evades, but this book will eventually demonstrate multiple and convincing evidences that Jesus’ revolutionary activities actually

took place in the AD 60s, and he was not crucified until AD 70.

Chronology

Chronology is one of many thorny problems that has persuaded theologians that Saul can never, in any circumstance, be associated with Josephus – for their association lets the chronological genie out of the bottle. But in my doing just this, and in setting the gospel accounts in the 60s AD, the hero-figure of the Bible becomes directly involved in the bitter struggles of the Jewish War. Out goes the Catholic imagery of a pacifist hero, and in comes the icon of a warrior-king – a King Arthur of Judaeo-Syria.

In other words, Saul-Josephus started this great game of chronological and nominative charades

because he needed a virtuous, largely pacifist hero-figure – an icon who could be portrayed to the faithful as a role model for a virtuous life – but the life and times of Jesus of Gamala did not conform with those requirements in any way. Saul-Josephus was not interested in Jesus' and James' Egypto-Judaic revolution. He had been in Rome long enough to see that the Empire was pretty much invincible, and he was pragmatic enough to realise that any rebellion against the Emperor would end in disaster. That is why he eventually changed sides and worked for the Romans.

When all the revolutionary dust had settled, following the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans in AD 70, all Saul-Josephus wanted was a compliant, largely Gentile congregation who would do his

bidding and throw shekels in his collecting plates. Who needs the privations and misery of revolution, when you can have a lucrative source of income instead?

On the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store according as he has been prospered ... And when I am come, whosoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters, to carry your gift to Jerusalem. [B86](#)

Brothers ... the churches of Macedonia ... the overflowing of their joy and the depth of their poverty abounded to the riches of their generosity. For I testify that according to their ability and beyond their ability, they willingly gave. [B87](#)

What makes you feel so inferior to other churches? Is it because I have not allowed you to support me financially? My humblest apologies for this great wrong! ... It is you I want, not your money. Children don't have to put by their savings for their parents; parents do that for their children. [B88](#)

Note the subtle distortion of meaning in the last verse just quoted; a paragraph worthy of a professional psychologist. It is clear that Saul had recently visited the Corinthians and had not got as much money from them as he had hoped. So he proposes to come a third time, but they are not to worry if they feel inferior to Saul-Josephus's other congregations, if they cannot give him as much money, because that is not what he is looking for (honest!). The true intent of this letter is that the Corinthians would not want to feel embarrassed nor inferior in any way to the other fledgling congregations around the Mediterranean, and will give Saul-Josephus as much as they can. 'Oh, you shouldn't have,' Saul-Josephus would have said, as he stuffed the gold into his ever growing treasure-chest.

However, it was not just Saul-Josephus' new Church of Simple Judaism that was reaping great dividends, so were his secular works. His secular histories of Judaea and the Jewish people, *The Jewish War* and

**Rulers and Administrators in the
Near East of the First Century**

Emperors	High Priests	Governors	Monarchs
Augustus (27BC-14)	Simon b Boethus (5BC) Jesus b See (5BC-6)		Herod the Great (40BC-4BC)
Tiberias (14-37)	Ananus (Annas) (6-15) Ishmael b Phabi (15) Eleazar / Simon (17-18) Joseph Caiaphas (18-37)	Ambivulus (9-12) Rufus (12-15) Valerius (15-26)	Herod Archelaus (4BC-6) Herod Antipas (4BC-39) Herod Philip (4BC-34)
Gaius Caligula (37-41)	Jonathan b Ananus (37-39) Theophilus b Ananus (40)	Pontius Pilate (26-36) Marcellus (37)	
Claudius (41-54)	Simon Cantheras (41) Matthias b Ananus (42-43) Elionaeus b Cantheras (44) Joseph b Camei Ananias b Nebedaeus (47-50)	Fadus (44-46)	Agrippa I (41-44) Alexander (46-48)
Nero (54-68)		Cumanus (48-52) Felix (52-59) Festus (60-62) Albinus (62-64)	Agrippa II (56-95)
Galba (69) Otho (69) Vitellius (69)	Jesus b Damnaeus (62-64) Jesus b Gamala (64-65) Matthias b Theophilus (65-67)	Florus (66-70)	
Vespasian (69-79)	Phannias b Samuel (67-70)	Bassus (70-72)	
Titus (79-81)	Johanan b Zakkai (70-95?)	Silva (72-81)	
Domitian (81-96)	Johanan b Zakkai (70-95?)	Longinus (82-?)	
Nerva (96-98)		Campanus (93-?)	
Trajan (98-117)		Atticus (99-103?)	

Dates of high priests and governors are only approximate.

Josephus' High Priest Ananus is given as Annas in the New Testament.

'b' refers to 'ben' or 'son of'.

List of high priests from William Whiston, p535. List of governors from Penguin Classics.

Fig 1.3 Rulers and administrators in the Near East of the first century.

Antiquities of the Jews were written for profit as much as for their literary, historical or propaganda value. Saul-Josephus was being maintained in a manner of some comfort in Judaea and Rome by emperors Vespasian, Titus and Domitian; and it was these three imperial patrons who were effectively paying for Saul-Josephus' 'publisher', Epaphroditus, to complete the laborious task of making copies of these huge books (*Antiquities* alone contains twenty volumes). Saul-Josephus quotes, with some pride, the glowing testimonies that he received from King Agrippa II after the king had read his works. He also presented copies to Emperor Titus in the hope that he would sign them as being

authentic, thus increasing their value. ^{J89} Having succeeded in this enterprise Saul-Josephus then distributed and sold copies of his works across the eastern provinces:

So confident was I of (these books') veracity ... Vespasian and Titus were the first to whom I presented my volumes, copies afterwards being given to many Romans who had taken part in the campaign. Others I sold to a large number of my compatriots, among whom were Archelous (brother-in-law of King Agrippa), the most venerable Herod (unknown which one) and the most admirable King Agrippa II himself. ^{J90}

Saul-Josephus could not have sold copies of his books to the emperors of Rome and to the Roman commanders if they had contained any glowing testimonials to the biblical Jewish rebel known as Jesus (of Gamala). These would have been testimonials to a character who had caused the

Romans a great deal of trouble in the past, and whose followers were some of the chief instigators of the Jewish rebellion that cost so many Roman lives. Titus would have burned the books and probably Josephus, too, had Jesus been a hero-figure in these secular works.

Of necessity, Saul-Josephus' two books regarding the history of Judaea in the first century had to be separate; one was a secular Roman story, the other a spiritual Judaeo-Christian version for his new Church of Simple Judaism. This was something that Saul's schizophrenic persona and audacious level of confidence could accomplish with great ease — especially if this literary duality was in the interests of the emperors. In the book *Jesus* I argued that Saul-Josephus would have to have kept his

association with Simple Judaism a secret. But further research has uncovered the possibility of a reversion of this common-sense assumption. Contrary to what I expected, we will see evidence in later chapters that suggests that the Flavian emperors were personally involved in Simple Judaism, as it was seen to be 'useful' to their rule; a possibility that may explain why Saul-Josephus was patronised by the Flavians for so long.

With the emperor's seal of approval on his (secular) works, Saul-Josephus was free to peddle further copies of his books to the rich and prominent Jews and Romans in Syrio-Judaea, and to the Jewish Diaspora across Europe. He organized this with great vigour from his private university in Jabneh, on the coast of Judaea, sending some 62 letters of

recommendation of his works – penned under the name of Josephus Flavius – out across Europe. All this, at a time when such correspondence must have cost a fortune! ^{J91} And in a similar fashion, Saul-Josephus was probably still penning letters to his small congregations of Simple Judaism (Christianity), who were dotted around the Mediterranean.

The quisling Jewish army commander had come a long way since his surrender to the Romans at the siege of Jotapata. He was now employed by the emperor of Rome himself, and was free to peddle his many books and letters throughout the empire. He owned extensive lands in Judaea, which had been granted tax-free, and possessed his own private Judaic university; an institution that included the Sanhedrin or Jewish

parliament, which had been displaced from Jerusalem after the war. In effect, Saul-Josephus had become the *de facto* high priest of Judaea. Finally, the jet-setting Saul-Josephus could also call in at his many churches and pick up armfuls of gold from the gullible adherents to his new creed of Simple Judaism. Life is often good to the victors, but Saul-Josephus seems to have been remarkably lucky to have reached this exalted position after all the opposition and setbacks he had previously encountered. He was master of all he surveyed.

Meanwhile, however, the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James was faced with annihilation. The revolt against the Judaeen authorities and against Rome had failed cataclysmically. Jerusalem and its beautiful Temple had been destroyed,

and the authorities and most of the people of Jerusalem had been scattered. Apart from a few towns that had always been pro-Roman, the entire lands of Judaeo-Israel had been emptied of Jews, who had been scattered across the Roman Empire to work as slaves.

Many of the Galilean Sect's leaders, including Jesus and his sons, had been in Jerusalem at the time of the siege, surrendering two weeks before its final fall: all were imprisoned and taken to Rome. Legends indicate that Mary the Virgin sailed to Ephesus, Mary Magdalene went to the south of France, Judas went to India, while it is entirely possible that Jesus was exiled to England. It is beyond the scope of this book to look at all of these legends, but there will be a closer look at the interesting evidence for Jesus'

exile to England in a later chapter.

Saul-Josephus

This, then, is the central plank of this investigation. The theory that Saul was actually Josephus Flavius was proposed back in 1998 in a single chapter in *Jesus, Last of the Pharaohs*, a proposal that caused a minor sensation out of all proportion to the length of this analysis. However, since this chapter was simply a brief overview of the similarities between Saul and Josephus, there were many claims that the chronology and lives of these two individuals could never match. On the surface, it might appear that Josephus was too young to have been Saul, and so the similarities between their life-stories had to be mere coincidence. Nevertheless, I

remained convinced that such a high level of correspondence between these two people was far too compelling for this idea to be dismissed out of hand, and the result was this book.

summary

Simple Judaism (Christianity) has adopted many elements from Egyptian theology and from the early Pagan mystery religions.

seems unlikely that so many biblical characters, like Saul (St Paul) and Jesus, can be missing from the historical record.

Saul (St Paul) has twenty or more points of commonality with Josephus Flavius, the first century AD historian.

The biblical Jesus appears to have many points of commonality with Jesus of

Gamala.

' these correspondences can be made, then Jesus' mission and crucifixion must have taken place in the AD 60s, and not the AD 30s.

*1 The possibility that John the Baptist represented Jesus' father would demand a complete rethink on the chronology of John's famous death, and probably encounter insurmountable chronological obstacles. As will be demonstrated in *Jesus, King of Edessa*, Jesus' father died in about AD 50 and it would seem unlikely that John's death could have been so late. Bearing in mind these difficulties, it is likely that John was from a closely linked and equally illustrious family line.

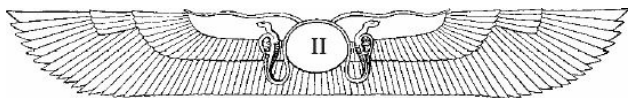
*2 For readers who are not familiar with precession, this is a real astronomical event caused by the precession of the equinox – the slight wobble of the Earth. See *Jesus, Last of the Pharaohs* for further details.

*3 This is often termed the 'Great Year'. However, since there are twelve of these eras that comprise one precessional revolution of the Earth, surely this period should be called a 'month'. Thus the era of each Great Month lasts about 2150 years, while the

Great Year lasts about 25,700 years. This book will continue with the title 'Great Month' for the precessional era of one constellation.

*4 The Nag Hammadi texts will be discussed later.

*5 The William Whiston translation says Jesus Saphat, but this is obviously the same ringleader already named as Jesus of Sapphias. The Penguin Classics says Sapphias for both.



Chronology of Saul

The evidence seems to suggest that Saul (St Paul) was actually our old historian friend Josephus Flavius. But one of the biggest problems with an association between these two characters is the seeming incompatibility of their birth dates, with Saul being said to have been born around AD 5 and Josephus in a much later, but more reliably dated, AD 37. In truth, however, the birth date of Saul is completely unknown, and the date given in classical references has just

been implied from a study of some of his activities in Acts of the Apostles and his epistles (letters). In fact the Catholic Encyclopaedia declines to speculate on a date of birth at all, which is very peculiar, while the Encyclopaedia Britannica suggests that Saul was born 'at about the same time as Jesus'.

Yet within this chronological uncertainty we see yet another of those antipodal discrepancies between the writings of Josephus and those of the New Testament. Josephus, in his epic history of Judaeo-Israel, gives hundreds of time-line references which often refer back to the reign of a Roman emperor or a Judaeian king. With very few exceptions, the vast majority of Josephus' accounts can be set into the historical record with an accuracy of plus or minus a few years.

On the other hand, the Acts of the Apostles, which details much of the life of Saul (St Paul), contains no indisputable time-line pegs at all.

Why is this so? Was Acts deliberately created in this manner, because the dates of each event were deemed unimportant to the message? Were the authors of Acts uncertain about the true chronology, because they were working in a later era and the fine detail had all been forgotten? Or was the time-line expressly given, as it is in the works of Josephus, but the dates mentioned were deemed to be unacceptable to the later Catholic Church, and therefore deleted? In other words, has there been a program of deliberate alteration and deception?

The balance of probabilities has to lie with the latter, and the first piece of evidence for this is to be found in

the first Epistle to the Corinthians. This Sauline letter mentions a ‘ghostly’ Jesus being seen by the disciples after the resurrection, but then goes on to mention Saul as well:

After that, he (Jesus) was seen of James; then by all the apostles. And last of all he was seen by me (Saul) also, as of one born out of due time. 1Corinth 15:7-8.

Readers can probably immediately grasp the obvious meaning of this phrase: that Saul was born a generation later than Jesus and his disciples - ‘beyond the time’ of the other disciples. Adam Clarke in his 1832 *Commentary on the Bible* understands this passage in precisely this manner and says of it:

The apostle considers himself as coming after the time in which Jesus Christ personally conversed with his disciples.

All of which would seem to be fairly obvious - Saul was born in the generation after Jesus and his disciples. Yet there is a problem with this obvious deduction, and so Adam Clarke rather forgets about this later era for Saul, when he discusses the content of the other epistles.

And so this rather innocuous-looking verse has caused an amount of discussion and disagreement within theological circles, because theologians are not keen on Saul being born a generation after Jesus - in the AD 30s for instance - because that would make him rather young during his Mediterranean tours. Not only would this revised Saul have been far too young to have been a great teacher at this time, this later date would also align him rather too closely with the life of Josephus Flavius. And so many

theologians have instead sought to translate this phrase as meaning 'before his time', which actually refers to a premature birth or an abortion. This alternative meaning is often taken as being a highly derogatory comment about Saul - 'puny and scarcely worthy of the name of a man', as the Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown *Commentary on the Bible* phrases it - which is a surprising view, given that Saul wrote most of the New Testament. It would appear that some theologians would rather denigrate the most prolific author of the New Testament, rather than allow his birth date to be in the same era as Josephus Flavius.

The precise era of Saul's birth and early life is therefore very important in deciding who this pivotal character really was, and we can perhaps glean some more information

about his life and times from the rough chronology given in the Acts of the Apostles. There are a number of events in Acts that have regularly been used to try and determine the era in which Saul was active on his missions across the Mediterranean, and thus deduce the true chronology of Acts. These include:

1. Cyprus

The first of the possible dating that can be deduced from Acts comes from Saul's first missionary tour of Cyprus. The texts say that:

So they (Saul and Barnabas) ... departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus ... And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer (*magus*), a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was (Elymas) Bar Jesus, who was with the deputy of the country, Sergius

There are two characters of note here. The first is Elymas bar Jesus, a man of uncertain origins and provenance whose name translates as 'Wise man Son of Jesus'. The biblical Concordance is silent on the identity of this Son of Jesus, but the possibility that he was the son of the real biblical Jesus is inescapable. He was called a *magus* – one of the Magi, a term that has been badly translated as a 'sorcerer' – in exactly the same way that Simon Magus was.^{*1} In addition Saul (Josephus) is greatly opposed to this character and blinded him and, as we know, the primary subjects of Saul's (Josephus') wrath were the followers and family of Jesus and James. It is entirely possible, therefore, that we have here the mention of one of Jesus' sons.

The second character of note here is Sergius Paulus, for he is a historical character who has a short mention in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* as a Lucius Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Cyprus.² The date given for Paulus' appointment is AD 51, which would make our newly conjoined character, Saul-Josephus, just fourteen years old at this time, perhaps a little older if Saul-Josephus arrived in Cyprus during Sergius Paulus' second or third year of office. Let's settle on AD 53 and the age of sixteen.

While this might seem to be a little young for an evangelical adventurer setting off across the Mediterranean, it should be remembered that a Jewish boy becomes *bar mitzvah* (a Son of the Commandment) at the age of thirteen or

fourteen, depending on the sect. He is then said to be a man, and at the turn of the first century he is likely to have gone out into the world at this age to seek a profession. It is entirely possible that Saul-Josephus was doing the same thing, and so his first missionary tour was actually conducted as an apprentice, and not as a fully-fledged priest. This is why Saul-Josephus was travelling with Barnabas, his religious guide and mentor, for he was still learning his trade. A later chapter will provide an interesting resolution to the identity of Barnabas, and demonstrate that he was indeed the elder of the two and thus Saul-Josephus' mentor.

Josephus' autobiography confirms that he, too, considered himself to be a man from an early age. He says that at the age of fourteen he

was noted for his love of letters and that the priests used to come to him for advice.

Moreover, when I was a child, and about fourteen years of age, I was commended by all for the love I had to learning; on which account the high priests and principal men of the city came then frequently to me together, in order to know my opinion about the accurate understanding of points of the law.^{J3}

As one might expect, this was actually a gross exaggeration, but Saul-Josephus could not be seen to be outdone by his primary competitor and enemy, Jesus:

And it came to pass, that after three days they found (a twelve-year old Jesus) in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors (of the law), both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.^{B4}

These passages were obviously written to impress Saul-Josephus' Gentile friends and readers, who may not have understood Judaic traditions, for it is obvious that both of these references are to a standard *bar mitzvah*. As already mentioned, at the age of thirteen or sometimes fourteen, a young male Jew undergoes a ritual celebration of his passing through to manhood. However, as a part of this ritual he is sometimes summoned before an eminent rabbi to demonstrate his knowledge of the Torah and Tanakh, and is then allowed to give a *d'var Torah* or a *drasha* on the Sabbath – a discussion or sermon on this week's Torah reading. In other words, these references to both Jesus and Saul-Josephus amazing the sages and rabbis of the era with their knowledge of the Torah are simply

exaggerated accounts of these boys passing their *bar mitzvah* knowledge-test with flying colours, and leading that week's Torah lesson in the synagogue or Temple. There are still some people who think that this account represents a biblical 'miracle' and therefore one of the foundation-stones of their belief system, but apart from an element of exaggeration there is nothing unusual or miraculous about these accounts whatsoever.

Two years later, at the age of sixteen, Josephus says that he was given a private education for three years with someone called Bannus, a man who dwelt in the wilderness and lived off trees and herbs. This description obviously refers to an ascetic, and the most famous sect of religious ascetics in this era was the Essene. Thus, Saul-Josephus is

intimating that he was educated by (and travelled with?) an Essene tutor called Bannus for three years, from AD 53 to AD 56. However, it would appear that the equivalent stories in Acts of the Apostles say that Saul went off on his missionary tours at this very same time, with his mentor called Barnabas, who was also an Essene as we shall see in a later chapter.

I think readers will find that Josephus' tutor called Bannus is actually one and the same as Saul's 'tutor' called Barnabas, and so this is the same apprenticeship by the same person. When Josephus says that he was tutored by Bannus, he actually means that he was on a grand missionary tour across the Mediterranean with Barnabas.

What has happened here is that a pious monk in the early centuries AD

was quietly reading Josephus' *Life*, when he noticed that Josephus was on a missionary tour with Barnabas! For many reasons an association between Josephus and Barnabas is totally unacceptable to the Catholic Church. So, having nearly choked himself in startled amazement on his goblet of left-over communion wine, the dutiful monk decided to scratch out a part of the name. With a few deft pen-strokes, Barnabas Βαρναβας became Bannus Βαννος, and the world of this dutiful monk returned to its usual deceitful serenity.

One of the problems the priest was afraid of is that if Bannus was actually Barnabas, then it is highly likely that Josephus was Saul, which is an unacceptable proposition for any pious Christian. But this nominative confluence does confirm, once more,

the arguments already laid out in Chapter I. We also now have a slightly more reliable time-line to work from, for Josephus says that he started his apprenticeship with Bannus (Barnabas) when he was sixteen. Thus, Saul-Josephus and Barnabas (Bannus) would indeed have arrived in Cyprus and met Sergius Paulus in AD 53.

2. Gallio

The next positive date in Acts comes from a reference to Saul's tour of Greece. Saul travelled from Athens to Corinth and lodged with a brother there:

And because he was of the same Craft, he lodged with them and did some business: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.^{B5}

Actually Saul was said to be a

skenopoios σκηνοποιος, which is more accurately termed as a designer of the Tabernacle. In other words, just like Jesus' profession of architect (*tekton* τεκτον), Saul's position as tentmaker was just another poor allusion to the position of a Mason, which is why Omar Khyyam was similarly styled as a tentmaker. It is then said that:

And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaea (Greece), the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Saul, and brought him to the judgment seat. Saying, This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law. [B6](#)

This is another of the rare examples, in Acts of the Apostles, of a character that actually appears in the historical record; for this Gallio appears to have been Junius Annaeus Gallio, the brother of Seneca who became the Roman proconsul of Achaea (Greece)

in AD 51. This court case occurred during Saul's visit to Corinth, and because of the mention of Gallio the biblical Concordance dates this visit to AD 53; but AD 54 is more likely.

Working again under the theory that Saul was actually Josephus, Saul would have been aged 17 at this time and he would have been fully expected, as a Jewish adult, to answer for his actions before a court of law. But before Saul-Josephus could utter a word, Gallio, who was obviously not a Jew, stated that if a crime had been committed then he would judge the case, but if it was a matter of religious interpretation then the case was dismissed – and on saying that the case was indeed dismissed. Saul-Josephus had slithered off the hook, an act that would become his trademark over the next two decades.

3. *Stephen*

Stephen is an unknown follower of the Galilean Sect, who Professor Robert Eisenman links to James, the brother of Jesus, as we shall see shortly. The fact that Saul was only a young man when Stephen was stoned to death is detailed in the Acts of the Apostles:

(They) cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen ... and when he had said this, he died.^{B7}

It is often said that because Saul (St Paul) was said to be young during this event, then Stephen must have been killed in AD 35; and in turn this early date means that Saul must have been born in about AD 10. But this is a completely circular argument, for we do not know when Saul was born, nor

when Stephen died, and so the one cannot be used to support the other.

The only information we do have about Saul's birth is that he was born in Tarsus^{*2} and was educated under Rabbi Gamaliel, the noble lawyer, governor and member of the Sanhedrin mentioned in Acts 5:34. This would have been a goldmine of chronological information, if the life and times of Gamaliel were well known, but they are not. The Jewish Encyclopaedia gives little information on Gamaliel aside from his teachings, while the Talmud fares little better.

However, the verse in Acts portrays Gamaliel as being sympathetic and supportive towards the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James, while the name 'Gamaliel' is used interchangeably with the name 'Gamala'. All in all, it would appear

that this Gamaliel was linked to the revolutionary sect of Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus). The *Clementine Recognitions* go one stage further, and say that Gamaliel was a secret disciple of Jesus.⁸ Interestingly, the Talmud claims that Johanan ben Zakkai asked the Roman commander, Vespasian, for Gamaliel's family to be spared after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, a magnanimous act that will be linked later with the pardoning (or at least the reprieve) of the family of Jesus after the crucifixion. In a later chapter Gamaliel will be closely identified with Jesus' family, but even this identification does not help us with a possible date for Saul's birth and education.

However, this stoning of Stephen to death may help us date the birth of Saul, but in a completely unexpected

manner. As is usual with many of these New Testament characters, we have no idea whatsoever who this martyred Stephen was. This might sound like a bizarre and contrived situation, but it is quite common throughout the New Testament. Professor Robert Eisenman says of this state of affairs:

The 'Stephen' in Acts is a fictitious stand-in, as are quite a few other characters we have already called attention to in Acts (and there will be more).⁹

So if Stephen was not Stephen, then who was he? Surprisingly enough, the rather explosive answer to this is that he was probably James, the brother of Jesus. Professor Eisenman takes up the story again, and indicates that the texts have been doctored to cover up both the name of the perpetrator and the name of the victim:

The ‘Stephen’ in Acts is a fictitious stand-in ... for the attack by Saul on James ... which was evidently considered so embarrassing by the early Church writers that it was unmentionable – but not forgotten. This is basically the only difference (between the two attacks). In the *Homilies*, the attack by Saul on James has also been deleted and the narrative reformed accordingly.¹⁰

Thus the verse from Acts, which has previously been quoted, deliberately uses a fictitious name, and the ephemeral Stephen who was stoned to death was actually James, the brother of Jesus. We also have a rather innocent-looking Saul standing by, whistling calmly and collecting a few coats, while some evil compatriots do the dirty deed. However, that is probably not what happened. The *Clementine Recognitions*’ version of these events is that:

Some one of our enemies, entered the temple

with a few men, and began to cry out, and to say, ‘Why are you led headlong by most miserable men, who are deceived by Simon, a magician?’*³ ... While James the bishop was refuting him, he began to excite the people and to raise a tumult (saying) ‘Why do you hesitate? Why do we not lay hands upon them, and pull all these fellows to pieces?’

When he had said this, he, seizing a strong brand from the altar, set the example of smiting. Then others also, seeing him, were carried away with like readiness. Then ensued a tumult on either side, of the beating and the beaten. Much blood was shed ... in the midst of which that enemy attacked James, and threw him headlong from the top of the steps; and supposing him to be dead, he cared not to inflict further violence upon him.¹⁴

In the Dead Sea Scrolls, the ‘enemy’ or ‘liar’ appears to be a reference to Saul (Josephus), while in the New Testament epistles it is again Saul who plaintively pleads that he is not lying. Likewise, in the margins of the *Recognitions*, there is a note to say that

the ‘enemy’ here is Saul. This is what the authorities wanted to cover up: the fact that it was Saul-Josephus who killed James (Stephen), the brother of Jesus. (Although *Recognitions* claims that James recovered but had a limp ever afterwards.) However, there is also a problem with the date of James’ (Stephen’s) death, and so Professor Eisenman takes up the story once more:

There is clearly something very peculiar about the sequencing of events relating to these two stonings, as we have them in Acts and Josephus. Of course there is a 20-year gap between them, but we have this concerning the two riots too, the one in Acts led by Paul (Saul) after the attack on Stephen in the 40s, and the other in Josephus led by Saulus (Saul) after the attack on James in the 60s. It is almost as if the two documents are totally remaking each other’s chronology.¹⁵

Indeed, the chronology has most definitely been ‘reworked’. The New

Testament writers needed Saul-Josephus to be old enough to meet and interact with the disciples in events that are traditionally dated to the AD 30s and 40s. Therefore, the whole life and times of Saul-Josephus had to be pulled back two decades or so into the past, from the AD 60s to the AD 40s. So if there was any stoning to be done, it would be rather handy if this could have occurred in the AD 40s, and not the AD 60s.

This can be confirmed in the accounts of Josephus Flavius for, contrary to the apparent absence of Jesus from these accounts, James does gain a short entry. Surprisingly enough, he is not mentioned whatsoever in *The Jewish War*, the book that details all of the events of this era and region, but he does get a short mention in *Antiquities*. This single paragraph account happens

to be of James' trial and stoning during the era of Albinus, who had just arrived in Judaea as Roman procurator after the death of Festus. If Josephus is correct in this report, then we know that James died in about AD 62 (in contrast, the *Clementine Recognitions* indicate a date of AD 66¹⁶). Since Josephus Flavius' accounts are generally more reliable than the Acts of the Apostles, the stoning of James (Stephen) most probably took place in the AD 60s.

But Acts of the Apostles had yet another problem to smooth over, for Saul was known to be the founder of the Christian Church. It was bad enough that he was the persecutor of the Church of Jesus and James before his 'flash of inspiration' on the road to 'Damascus', but to also have Saul (Josephus) as the murderer of James,

the brother of Jesus, would have been intolerable. Besides, it was probably well known that James actually died in the AD 60s. By all means and methods, the death of James had to be divorced from the actions of Saul-Josephus, and so the unfortunate martyr (James) was called Stephen instead.

So, apart from facilitating a cover-up for an embarrassed Catholic Church, why was James being called Stephen? The easiest answer to this is that 'Stephen' was, once again, a title rather than a name. Stephen^{*4} comes from the Greek Stephanos Στεφάνος meaning 'crown' or even 'king'. In a similar fashion, the root of the name for the Nazarene Sect – of which Jesus, James and Mary Magdalene were all members, as we shall see later – was *nazer* נֹזֵר meaning 'crown'. Nazer was eventually transliterated into the Greek

as Nazarene (Nazeraios) Ναζωραίος. Thus, 'Stephen' simply means 'Nazarene', and since James was a Nazarene, as Matthew 2:23 makes clear, then the title James Stephen or James the Nazarene was entirely appropriate. (The reference to a town called Nazareth is a diversionary tactic, as no such town existed in this era.)

But 'Stephen' was not simply a reference to the Nazarene Sect, for Jesus was also a real king, as I have argued in the book *Cleopatra*, which is why he was styled as the 'Christ'**5 and then the 'King of the Jews' during his crucifixion. Since James was of the same royal family, he too was a prince and could be named James-Stephen or perhaps even James-Christ (King James). However, in my estimation, James was probably the younger of the

two brothers and was therefore not really entitled to the title 'Christ' but could aspire to the title 'Stephen'.

The end result of my and Professor Eisenman's arguments about the stoning of Stephen, an obvious conclusion that Eisenman largely ignores, is that there is absolutely no need for Saul to have been born in AD 10 or 20. If the stoning of Stephen was actually the theologically embarrassing stoning and death of James the brother of Jesus, in AD 62 or 66, then Saul could have been born at a much later date. Thus, rather than the stoning of Stephen indicating that Saul was born in AD 10, it actually concurs rather well with the whole 'Saul equals Josephus' thesis. If Saul was born in AD 37, the same date as Josephus Flavius, then Saul would have been aged either 26 or 29 at the time of

James-Stephen's death.

4. Damascus

Another verse in the New Testament that may help pin down a chronology in the life of Saul concerns his explanation about his escape from 'Damascus':

In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me. And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands. [B18](#)

This event occurred shortly after Saul's 'flash of inspiration' on the road to Damascus, and so defining the date here, perhaps from the name of the king, would give us a firm peg upon which the rest of the chronology can be hung. Unfortunately, things are not that

simple.

Firstly, we don't exactly know where Saul was. The account seems to confidently refer to Damascus in Syria, but King Aretas of Nabataea never had control of Damascus, as far as we are aware, an observation which completely undermines this report. Secondly, Saul was only in Damascus because he had a legal summons from the high priest of Jerusalem to apprehend and arrest the Jews who lived there:

And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of the Way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. [B19](#)

However, it is highly unlikely that the writ of the Jerusalem high priest ran in

Syria, which had long been under separate Roman control. So what was Saul doing with a Judaeen writ in a Roman province run by a Roman legate? Indeed, why was Saul in a position to arrest people anyway? Indignant, threatening and fiery he may have been, but a policeman he was not – or was he?

Surprising as it may seem, the easiest way of explaining the authority and actions of Saul is by saying that he was Josephus, for Josephus also had a warrant to arrest certain bandits.

At a mass meeting in the Temple (of Jerusalem, the high priests) appointed additional generals for the army ... both parts of Galilee were assigned to Josephus (Flavius), son of Matthias, together with Gamala, the strongest city in that area.^{J20}

Josephus had just become the army general in command of Galilee and

Gamala, and so he did indeed have the authority to arrest bandits and haul them back to Jerusalem. However, this authority was not given to Josephus until AD 66, which seems to be much later than the equivalent date for Saul's authority to make arrests in 'Damascus'. But the account of Saul's authority to make arrests in Acts comes just after the death of James-Stephen, or just after AD 62 or 66. In which case, this section of material has simply been inserted in the wrong point in Acts, and so the dates do concur.

The first action of Josephus Flavius, having obtained his command, was to ride to Tiberias and assess the situation. Having sent his report to Jerusalem, Josephus then decided to destroy the former palace of Herod Antipas, who had been deposed in AD

39. However, the ‘bandit’ who stopped him from doing so was a man called Jesus:

I told the (governors of Tiberias) that I was sent to them by the people of Jerusalem as a legate ... in order to persuade them to demolish that house which Herod (Antipas) had built there, and which had the figures of living creatures in it, although our laws have forbidden us to make any such figures ... (but) Jesus the son of Sapphias,*⁶ one of those whom we have already mentioned as the leader of a seditious tumult of mariners and poor people, prevented us.^{J21}

According to Josephus, this was not any old Jesus, but more specifically a leader of ‘mariners’ or ‘fishermen’. But in this era there was only one leader of a band of rebels who rallied to the symbol of the fish, and that was the biblical Jesus Christ (King Jesus). According to the Catholic Church the Christian fish symbolism was derived

from the Greek term *ichthys* meaning 'fish', which apparently stands for '*Iesous Christos Theou Yios Soter*' meaning 'Jesus Christ Son of God and Saviour'. However, this is simply a convenient explanation to cover up the true symbolism, and I have already demonstrated in my other books that the Christian fish symbolism was derived from the zodiac and the new age of Pisces, which began in AD 10 or so. The clergy will claim that Judaism and Christianity have nothing in common with astrology, but in recent years six synagogues have been excavated in Israel and Jordan, and each had a mosaic of the zodiac on the floor, as we shall see later.

The result of the similarity between these texts is that we know that Josephus was the 'chief of police' in Galilee and Gamala and he was

confronting the (biblical) Jesus, while Saul was also some kind of 'chief of police' who was similarly armed with a summons to arrest the followers of Jesus and James and was 'confronted' by the (resurrected) Jesus *en-route* to 'Damascus'. The latter event was Saul's 'flash of inspiration' on the road to Damascus, and we will look at that element of the story later.

But where was this Damascus? In a later chapter it will be conclusively demonstrated that the location called Damascus, in Acts and Corinthians, was actually Qumran on the shores of the Dead Sea; the headquarters of the monastic Essene Sect. But the Essene were also a splinter-group of the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James (the Fourth Sect of Judaism), and that is the reason why Saul expected to find them at this

location.

The final thing to note about the quote at the beginning of this discussion – about Saul and his flight from ‘Damascus’ (Qumran) – is that it is highly likely to have been an interpolation. Although Saul most probably did escape from ‘Damascus’ in a basket, as Acts of the Apostles covers the same story, the verse in Corinthians that mentions King Aretas is most probably spurious. Not only are the details historically impossible, the verse sits very badly in the context. Saul was in the middle of a large boasting session, a form of self-aggrandisement that was also regularly performed by Josephus:

I was flogged three times;

I was stoned once;

I was shipwrecked three times;

I have spent a night and a day in the deep.

I have been in travels often, in dangers of rivers, in dangers of robbers, in dangers from my race, in dangers from the nations, in dangers in the city, in dangers in the desert, in dangers on the sea, in dangers among false brothers, in hardship and toil, often in watchings, in hunger and thirst, often in fastings, in cold and nakedness ...

Jesus Christ knows ... that I am not lying.

In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me. And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands. (End of chapter)[B22](#)

These verses list a succession of adversities that Saul endured, and while the escape by basket was yet another adversity it is not presented in the staccato format of all the other adversities. To form a great list and then end the chapter with an out-of-place explanation about King Aretas does not make sense – unless the verses that detail the escape by basket

are a later addition. In fact, as interpolated texts go, this is the work of a complete amateur.

The result of all these deliberations is that Saul's flight from Damascus (or Qumran) cannot be dated in the usual manner, for King Aretas never had control over either of these 'cities of Damascus'. In fact, the only possible dating from these verses can be derived through the links between Josephus' command over Galilee and Gamala, and Saul's similar 'command' over 'Damascus'. As is usual, the events in the books of Josephus can be accurately dated and it is known that Josephus received his army command in late AD 66.

This date is just after the stoning of James-Stephen, according to the *Clementine Recognitions*, and *Recognitions* even suggests that

Josephus got this military position *because* of those riots and James-Stephen's 'death'. Likewise, in Acts of the Apostles these events also occur just after the stoning of James-Stephen, so the chronology of Acts is in agreement, even if these particular chapters are in the wrong position.

5. Trials and Rome

Saul was arrested and tried before Felix, Festus and Agrippa II. Felix took up his position as governor in AD 52, while Festus took over in AD 59, and so Saul must have been in jail for quite some time. In fact, he was in prison for a total of seven years, as we shall see. It is thought that Saul's third trial and subsequent shipment to Rome occurred in about AD 62.

In a similar fashion, Josephus

also went to Rome, but he says that he did this in his 26th year, or AD 63. If Saul and Josephus were the same individual, as has been demonstrated, then they must have gone to Rome at the same time and we can be fairly certain this was so because their journey(s) were caused by the same events. Josephus says:

Soon after my 26th year it fell to my lot to go up to Rome ... At the time when Felix was procurator of Judaea, certain priests of my acquaintance, very excellent men, were on a slight and trifling charge, were sent by him in bonds to Rome to render an account to Caesar.[J23*7](#)

The fact that Josephus has to qualify that these were 'trifling matters' is a sure sign that he was involved in something serious, and we know that these were not 'trifling matters' for Caesar (Nero) himself became

involved. Roman governors do not involve the Emperor if they can possibly help it, and so the charges or circumstances must have been serious.

The initial charges against Saul were of preaching against circumcision, not only among the Gentiles but among the Jews too. There was also the little matter about Jesus being a god and bringing Gentiles into the Temple of Jerusalem. In other words, Saul was teaching various doctrines that were not in accordance with Judaic law. Saul was brought before the courts to answer the charges and vigorously defended his actions (over several years) before Felix, then Festus, and then before the king himself, Agrippa II and his sister-wife, Berenice.

The first trial before governor Felix was in about AD 56. Having been

unable to resolve the situation, Felix merely held him under house arrest for some considerable time, hoping that Saul might bribe him into letting him go free. Then Felix was replaced by governor Festus, who brought Saul to trial once more and still could find nothing wrong in his conduct. This is presumably not simply because of Saul's blanket denials of wrongdoing but because, like Gallio of Achaëa's trial of Saul several years previously, Roman procurators were not particularly interested in doctrinal disputes within the Judaic faith. It was all incomprehensible to them, so how could he judge such a case? If Saul had not committed a criminal offence (a secular offence), then Festus was not interested, but letting Saul go might cause another riot. Exasperated by this impasse, Festus declared:

Saul thus made his defence. Festus said with a loud voice, Saul, you are raving mad; your great learning is driving you mad.^{B24}

In desperation, Festus sent Saul to trial before King Agrippa II, who was at least a Jewish monarch and might have a better understanding of these matters. Saul repeated, once more, that he had not caused a riot, it was his enemies who were causing the disturbances. Furthermore, Saul claimed his right as a Roman citizen to be heard by Caesar himself, which is eventually what happened. Thus, according to Saul, the accusations that led to this journey to Rome were trivial rather than serious.

But none of this really makes any sense. Why should a king and a governor of Judaea, a minnow state in the mighty Roman empire, trouble the emperor himself simply because the accused had perhaps caused a small

disturbance and had requested to be judged by Caesar? Had Saul-Josephus been found guilty as charged and sentenced to death, one might see the logic in him making an appeal to Caesar, but here Saul-Josephus is making an appeal after being found not guilty! I can just imagine the documentation that would be sent to Caesar, along with the prisoner. "Hail Caesar. The man before you is innocent, but we cannot decide whether to let him go or not. Please could you advise..."

I rather think that the result of this referral would be a summons from Caesar, for the idiots in charge of Judaea to attend his court and feel his wrath. Remember that this was the rabidly unstable Nero that Felix and Agrippa were dealing with, and it is most certain that rumours about his

despotic reign had reached the far outpost of Judaea by this time. So why, in this case, was Saul-Josephus being sent to Caesar? Well, there was indeed an alternative reason for this, and it concerns a very peculiar but typically Judaic argument about a wall, of all things. Josephus says of this wall:

About the same time king Agrippa built himself a very large dining-room in the royal palace at Jerusalem, near to the portico ... which afforded a most delightful prospect to those that had a mind to take a view of the city ... (but) when the chief priests of Jerusalem saw it they were very much displeased with it; for it was not agreeable to the institutions of our country or law that what was done in the temple should be viewed by others ... They therefore erected a wall upon the uppermost building ... which when it was built ... intercepted the view of the dining-room in the palace.^{J30}

The real problem with this wall that the Temple priests built was not that it

blocked the view of King Agrippa II, but that it also blocked the view of the Roman guards, who could no longer see if a sedition was being planned in the Temple courtyards. The arguments over this wall spun out of control, and so ten eminent priests were sent to Rome to plead their case before Nero.

This is all very interesting, but how do we know that this event involved Saul? The answer is a curt reply that Saul made to Ananias, the high priest of Jerusalem, during one of his court appearances:

At this Paul said to him, ‘God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! How dare you sit there judging me by the Law and give orders for me to be struck, which is clean contrary to the Law?’[B31](#)

The biblical Concordance does not attempt to explain why Saul called the high priest a ‘whitewashed wall’, but

the answer is obvious. The priesthood were claiming that Saul was acting ‘against the law’ in his teachings, while they themselves were technically ‘outside the law’ in building the wall. Saul was using his usual wit and carping tongue to cut the high priest down to size.

This convergence between Acts of the Apostles and real history gives us a real date for this meeting, and therefore a real date for Saul-Josephus’ journey to Rome. Professor Robert Eisenman, in his extensive research into what he calls the Temple Wall Affair, gives it the year AD 62, a date that I would wholeheartedly concur with.³² As Eisenman observes:

Ten other participants (priests) involved in the Temple Wall Affair were sent to Caesar as well. Since their appeals occur at exactly the same time as Saul’s (appeals) in Acts, it is

hard to conceive that they are not connected in some manner.³³

These events were indeed connected, for it was on this very same journey to Rome that both Saul and Josephus were sent (Saul-Josephus, I should say, for they were one and the same person). Josephus Flavius says of his companions on this journey to Rome:

There were certain priests of my acquaintance, and very excellent persons they were, whom on a small and



*Fig 2.1 A
sixth century
Byzantine ivory
of Saul.*

trifling occasion he (Festus) had put into bonds, and sent to Rome to plead their cause before Caesar.^{J34}

Although Josephus does not say so, it is quite clear that these were the same priests who were involved in the Temple Wall Affair, and so Saul-Josephus was being sent to Rome in exactly AD 62, at the age of 25 (not 26 as Josephus claims, but he was 26 by the time he got there!). And I doubt that the Temple Wall Affair was quite so trifling as Josephus makes out, for Festus believed that the Jews might foment a revolt at the next Temple festival without being observed by the Roman guard. However, there was one silver lining to all these shenanigans: Governor Festus had just found a method of getting Saul out of his jails and out of his life – he could go to Rome and plead a case for these

infuriating priests down at the Temple.
Problem solved!

Well, nearly solved, for it is likely that Saul-Josephus then proceeded to get himself in a spot of bother in Rome, as I shall narrate in another chapter. However, the fact that Josephus Flavius (Saul-Josephus) was indeed on this trip to Rome with the ten priests involved in the Temple Wall Affair, is confirmed in the very next paragraph which says:

When Nero had heard what they had to say, he not only forgave them (the priests) but also gave them leave to let the wall they had built stand. This was granted them in order to gratify Poppaea, Nero's wife, who was a religious woman, and had requested these favors of Nero.^{J35}

This report is almost identical to a later comment by Josephus Flavius that he too gained great favours from

Poppaea, as we shall see in a later chapter. These two comments about the beneficence of Poppaea have to be the same report, and so it appears certain that both Saul and Josephus (Saul-Josephus) went on this voyage to Rome to plead the case for the Temple Wall Affair.

But how did Saul-Josephus achieve this stunning success with Nero? Well, Nero only let the priests win their arguments in order to 'gratify Poppaea', but I don't think that Poppaea was very interested in Judaic politics. Josephus may indicate that Poppaea was a 'religious woman' but more importantly she was also known to be a woman with an insatiable appetite for young men. It may have been this element of the Imperial court case that clinched this small victory for Saul-Josephus, and it may also have

been this same indiscretion that caused Saul-Josephus to flee for his life. Saul-Josephus was not the messiah, he was a very naughty boy.

6. Shipwreck

The net result of all this was that in AD 62, having spent six or seven years under house arrest, Saul-Josephus was forced onto yet another great adventure across the Mediterranean. Both Saul and Josephus tell us about this eventful voyage, and we can be certain that these stories were one and the same because they both relate similar details and both ended in disaster. As we have just seen, it was not just Saul-Josephus on this voyage for he was accompanied by a dozen or so priestly petitioners who were *en-route* to Rome to defend the building of the controversial wall,

and Saul-Josephus mentions that the priests refused to eat anything on the voyage on religious grounds. It was Saul-Josephus, who was more of a Hellenist in both culture and creed, who eventually persuaded them to eat something so that they would not starve to death.

The ship then sailed into a great storm and the entire ship's company was in great peril, a dramatic saga which will be covered in more detail in a later chapter. However, of its disastrous conclusion, Josephus says of his voyage:

Our ship was drowned in the Adriatic Sea, we that were in it, being about six hundred in number, swam for our lives all the night; when, upon the first appearance of the day, and upon our sight of a ship of Cyrene, I and some others, eighty in all, by God's providence were taken up into the other ship ... and was come to Diearchia, which the Italians call Puteoli.^{J36}

In a similar fashion, Acts of the Apostles says of Saul's voyage:

And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest ... and all hope that we should be saved was then taken away ... they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmovable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves ... after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria ... and came the next day to Puteoli.^{B37}

Both ships were wrecked and in both cases the survivors were taken to Puteoli (modern Naples), and so this has to be the same event. Let us take another look at the sequence of those events here.

- a. Both Saul and Josephus disappeared from public life for a number of years, from about AD 56

onwards. Saul admits to being in prison, while Josephus just skips seven years of his life-story.

- b. Josephus details the Temple Wall Affair, and the ten priests who were sent to Rome, while Saul alludes to the same affair by calling the high priest a ‘whitewashed wall’.
- c. Both Saul and Josephus embark on a voyage to Rome in AD 62, and the dates match exactly, as Professor Eisenman confirms.
- d. Both of these voyages

end in disaster, with both ships encountering a storm and being wrecked.

- e. Both Saul and Josephus survive this disaster and are taken to Puteoli, or modern Naples, and then to Rome. Saul even relates that he stopped off at the Three Taverns Inn at Appius for a quick pint (Acts 28:15), which was well earned after such an eventful voyage, if you ask me.
- f. Both the petitioner for the Temple Wall Affair and Josephus Flavius himself became favourites of Poppaea,

Nero's wife, who
showered them (him)
with presents and
allowed the Temple
Wall to remain.

As can be seen, the origins of these voyages were the same, the dates were the same, the events upon these voyages were the same, and the meetings with Poppaea appear to have been much the same too. How much more evidence do we require before we can say that this was one and the same voyage? And if we do declare this to be the same event, then once more we can see clear evidence that Saul was in fact a pseudonym for Josephus Flavius.

Conjoined

The most important thing to note from all of this is that the dates for Saul's missionary tours around the Mediterranean fit this amalgamation of characters like a glove. It has been claimed by many theologians that Saul must have been born in AD 10 or so, in order to allow him to be old enough to go on these Mediterranean tours. However, as we have just seen, the only dateable elements in Saul's journeys refer to the early AD 50s. In fact, there is nothing within the life of Saul, as detailed within the New Testament, that would require his missionary tours to start before AD 53, when he was 16 years old. Even the epistles or letters of Saul, which form the bulk of the New Testament, all date from AD 53 onwards, as we shall see shortly. Thus, there is absolutely no need for Saul to have been born in AD

10, as is often claimed, and an equivalence with Josephus' birth-date of AD 37 is entirely possible, if not probable.

Even today, missionary tours are most often undertaken by the youth of a sect or community, a period in one's life when individuals have the time and freedom to do so, and Saul was no exception to this rule. He set off as a young adult, an apprentice aged sixteen, and in traditional Judaic terms a boy becomes an adult at the age of thirteen or fourteen. Therefore, not only do Saul and Josephus' life-stories match like a glove, but so do their chronologies. Saul was Josephus, and so I shall attempt to denote this conjoined person's name as Saul-Josephus from now on.

Summary

Saul-Josephus was sixteen years old during his first tour of the Mediterranean. He was an apprentice to Barnabas (Bannus) on this tour, which was undertaken in AD 53.

Saul-Josephus was said to be a 'young man' at the death of Stephen-James in AD 62 or 66. A birth-date of AD 37 would indeed make Saul-Josephus a young man at this time.

The Damascus event with King Aretas is an interpolated text, and so no conclusion about the date for this event can be drawn.

oth Saul and Josephus have a lacuna in their life, which was the seven years that they (he) spent in prison.


oth Saul and Josephus (Saul-Josephus) were on the ship taking the priests involved in the Temple Wall Affair to Rome in AD 62, and they both shared the same adventures.

here is nothing within the accounts of Saul that requires him to have been born before AD 37, and so an equivalence between Saul and Josephus is inescapable – they were the same person.

*1 Simon Magus was the favourite student of John the Baptist.

*2 Tarsus ταρσος means 'basket'. Knowing Saul's social aspirations, this mention of *tarsus* may have been designed to equate himself to Moses, who was also born in a basket (*tarsus*).

*3 Note that this meeting was chaired by Gamaliel, yet Saul-Josephus screams bile and abuse at Simon Magus – there may well be a connection here, as we shall see later.

*4 The origin of this title 'stephen', meaning 'king', may lie in the common Egyptian pharaonic title *setepenra*  meaning 'god's carpenter'. This would also explain the why Jesus was confused with a lowly carpenter.

*5 Both 'christ' and 'messiah' simply mean 'king'.

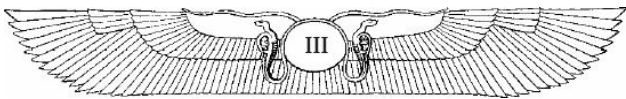
*6 The fact that this Jesus is called 'son of Sapphias', while the other Jesus we regularly come across is called Jesus 'of Gamala' is not a problem – for they were the same individual, as has already been mentioned. The 'of Gamala' refers to the location Jesus came from, while the 'son of Sapphias' refers to his mother.

This lady appears in the New Testament in Acts 5:1, where she is said to be the wife of Ananias (meaning high priest). The name Sapphias comes from the Greek *sappheiros* σαπφειρος meaning 'sapphire'; and since a sapphire is a blue stone both Mary (the Virgin) and Queen Thea Muse Ourania are traditionally depicted in blue. See the book *Cleopatra* for details.

*7 The charges against Saul-Josephus could have included the murder of James-Stephen, who may have been killed in AD 62. However, I have a feeling that the date from *Recognitions*, of AD 66, suits the events better. In AD 66, Saul-Josephus was just back from Rome and about to take up his military command of Galilee.

Most modern histories say that Festus was

governor of Judaea when Josephus was 26 years old.



Qumran and Damascus

In the Acts of Apostles there is one of the most famous quotes in the entire Bible, and that is the ‘flash of inspiration’ that Saul (St Paul) had while on the road to Damascus.

And as Saul journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice (Jesus) saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?[B1](#)

Here is Saul, the persecutor of the

Galilean Sect of Jesus and James, and suddenly this spiritual vision of his victim persuades Saul that he should mend his ways and befriend the Galileans. In fact, although Saul's actions are praised as being a virtuous conversion, this was an act akin to the head of the Metropolitan Police in London joining the Moonies and provoking the citizens of London into acts of civil disobedience against the authorities. Undoubtedly, the Jerusalem priesthood would have considered this conversion of Saul as being treasonous.

This episode does not explain, however, why Saul would have been marching across Syria towards Damascus. As we saw in the last chapter, Saul's summons or arrest warrant for the leaders of the Galilean Church of Jesus and James would not

have been valid in Syria, for the writ of Jerusalem did not extend that far in this era, so how did Saul expect to achieve his goal? The biblical Concordance does not explain this conundrum, but this paradox would tend to suggest that Saul's destination was not the city of Damascus in Syria. An alternative is perhaps suggested to us by the 'Damascus Document' of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which refers to the Essenes living in a location called Damascus. However, rather than the Essene living in a famous city in Syria, the wording and context of this document would strongly suggest that the Damascus mentioned actually refers to Qumran, the Essene stronghold on the shores of the Dead Sea.²

The epigraphic link between the name 'Damascus', which Saul-

Josephus uses for Qumran, and Qumran itself is not readily obvious. Damascus (Darmaseq) דַּרְמַשֶּׁק is said to mean 'Silent are the Sackcloth Weavers' in the biblical Concordance, but sometimes the origins of these interpretations defy logic. More conventional books indicate that *darmaseq* דַּרְמַשֶּׁק refers to silk, which was a noted product of Syrian Damascus but not of Qumran. Instead, a more reasonable translation for the latter might be *dar maseq* דַּר מַשְׁקָה meaning 'flowing water' or even 'pure water'. Since Qumran resides on the western shore of the salty Dead Sea, a name like Darmaseq that refers to the sweet water of the wadi Kumran, which seasonally pours off the hillside and through the valley immediately to the south of the site, would be quite appropriate. In which case, the

apparent similarity between the names for these two Damascuses may be entirely coincidental.

So who were the Essene? Judaism in the first century AD comprised the Sadducees, which were drawn principally from the priestly and aristocratic families; the Pharisees, drawn from artisans and lay circles; the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James based along the eastern fringes of Syrio-Judaea, which preached self-control and personal liberty; and the Essene ascetics, who I maintain were a monastic splinter-group of the Galilean Sect. However, within the wider cultural context of the first century Near East, it is not too difficult to equate the Sadducees with the Epicureans, the Pharisees with the Stoics, and the Essene with the followers of Plato or Pythagoras.

Many a theologian has wondered why the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James gained many followers from the priestly and aristocratic Sadducees, as mentioned in Acts 6:7. This observation conflicts greatly with the orthodox assumption that Jesus was an artisan and should therefore have had a greater affinity with the Pharisees. However, it has long been my assertion that Jesus was a prince of Egypt and Persia, who was looking for an opportunity to take the royal throne or high priest's pulpit of Judaea. Indeed, I give evidence in a later chapter to demonstrate that Jesus did indeed become an elected high priest of Jerusalem. In these revised circumstances, it is not so surprising that Jesus would have gained support from the Sadducees.

This also gives us a link back to

the Essene, because the title for the Sadducees was derived from the name Sadduk (Sadduc). This name was derived from Zadok צדוק, a priest during the reign of King David, but the Essene were similarly titled the 'Sons of Zadok', and so it is possible that the Essene had a number of disillusioned priests and aristocracy among their number, who had separated themselves from the traditional Jerusalem hierarchy.

However, the history of the site at Qumran may give us an additional origin for this title. Qumran was first settled in about 200 BC and was not abandoned until AD 68, as a result of military action by the Romans; but there is a significant lacuna in the archaeology of the site after the massive earthquake of 31 BC. It would seem that there was a temporary

abandonment of the site at this time, and the person who may have re-established Qumran as a religious site at the turn of the first century was Zadok, the deputy-leader of the Galilean Sect. Thus, as we have seen, the texts from Qumran declare the Essene community to be the Sons of Zadok:

Unite with respect to the Law and possessions, under the authority of the Sons of Zadok.³

In a similar fashion, the hero of the Essenes was called the Teacher of Righteousness, and 'righteousness' in Hebrew is termed *zadok* צדק. So the Essene were both the Sons of Zadok and led by the Teacher of Zadok. In a similar fashion, the founders of the Galilean Sect were Judas of Gamala and his second in command, called


Zadok. These people, I believe, arrived in Syrio-Jordan with Queen Thea Muse Ourania, the exiled queen of Parthia (Persia) in about AD 4. This is why Judas of Gamala was known as the Babylonian Jew, because he had just been exiled from Babylon (Parthia). See the book *Cleopatra* for further details.

The term *zadok* means ‘righteous’ or ‘just’, and it so happens that the Latin term for this has been turned into the Greek name Justus *Ἰουστος*. So it is not surprising that when we look into the history of the Galilean Sect we find individuals like Justus (Zadok) of Tiberias. Similarly, when looking at the biblical accounts, a number of people are surnamed Justus, like Barsabas Justus (possibly Josephus’ brother), James the Just (the brother of Jesus), and a curiously

named Jesus-Justus. In other words, this surname may well have referred to an individual who was allied to the Galilean and Essene sects, and perhaps more specifically it may have referred to members of Jesus' immediate family. They were the family of the Righteous, the Zadok, the Justus.

Bearing this in mind, we might derive a better translation for the name of the Essene. The Greek name used for the Essene is either the Essaioi Ἰσσαιῶι or the Essenoi Ἰσσηνῶι. The translation of this name is unknown and possibilities suggested by Geza Vermes include the 'Pious' or 'Healers'. However, an obvious equivalent to Essaioi, which may well have influenced this name, is Iesous Ἰησοῦς, the name of Jesus himself. If this were the case, then the Essene would have been known as the

‘Followers of Jesus’, and the links between the Essene and the biblical family would be undeniable. However, this tentative translation remains unproven.

Another term that may well refer to the Essene is the title or name ‘Barsabas’. Professor Eisenman maintains that the suffix *saba* refers to bathing, from the Hebrew *tsaba* צָבַע meaning ‘wet’ or ‘wash’. While that is possible, I have previously argued that *saba* has a much older history than this and it is actually derived from the Egyptian *saba*  meaning ‘star’. This is why the Sabeans in Yemen were known as ‘star-worshippers’ and also venerated the Queen of Heaven (the Queen of Sheba), who was an incarnation of the Egyptian Isis. In fact, the name ‘Sabean’ still refers to ‘star-

worshippers' – according to the Complete Oxford English Dictionary. So the title Saba refers to stars and has a secondary meaning of 'bathe', and there was only one sect in this era who made bathing and the veneration of the zodiac the primary components of their religion, and that was the Essene.

In fact, according to Professor Eisenman, the Star Prophecy – which was being used by Jesus to further his messianic claims to the throne of Judaea and possibly Rome – was 'highly prized at Qumran'.⁴ This is interesting, for it means that individuals like Barsabas (Barnabas), who was the travelling companion of Saul-Josephus on his Mediterranean tours, was probably an Essene. Just in case you were not quite sure about this, this same individual was also called Justus (or Zadok), and so he was most

definitely an Essene, for the Essene were known as the Sons of Zadok. Thus, the name 'Barsabas Justus' could be translated as 'Essene Essene'. The next chapter attempts to decipher exactly who this individual was, and the results of this investigation are rather surprising.

The Way

This might seem like a leap of faith, to declare that Jesus was not a part of mainstream Judaism, but that is exactly what the New Testament says. On numerous occasions, Jesus is rebuffed or tested and teased by the more orthodox Pharisees and Sadducees; and he even warns his disciples to beware of them (see Mat 3:7, 16:1 and 16:12). However, having ascertained that Jesus was most probably a

member of the Galileans – and closely allied to the Essene – places a different interpretation upon the previous verse, about Saul arresting people in Damascus. Since Saul was looking to arrest members of Jesus and James' Galilean Church, it is highly likely that Saul's expedition from Jerusalem was mounted against certain members of the Essene sect at Qumran (Damascus), rather than the city of Damascus in Syria. The evidence in support of this suggestion is to be found in the Acts of the Apostles, for in this gospel the people that Saul was looking to arrest were called The Way:

and asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of The Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. [B5](#)

Users of the King James and other

Bibles will note that the underlined section is translated as ‘any of this way’, as if the sentence were indicating a direction of travel, but the Revised Standard and many other Bibles translate this as a proper noun, ‘any of The Way’. So what does ‘The Way’ refer to? Well, the Essene of the Dead Sea Scrolls referred to themselves as the ‘Poor in Spirit’, the ‘Sons of Light’ and ‘The Way’; while their enemies were called the ‘Sons of Darkness’. An example of this title comes from the Community Rule, which says:

He (the master) shall impart true knowledge and the righteous judgement to those who have chosen The Way.⁶

One of the proper names for the community of the Dead Sea Scrolls was therefore The Way, and so this is a

term that must refer to the Essene Sect at Qumran. But, there is one more association we can make here for, as has already been noted, both the synoptic gospels and Acts of the Apostles also speak of The Way:

And Jesus said to him, Go, thy faith has made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in The Way.^{B7}

As already suggested, some Bibles, in a desperate bid to separate the Church of Jesus and James from any revolutionary or reactionary Judaic sects encamped in the desert near the Dead Sea, refuse to translate The Way as a proper name. Instead, they translate it as 'the way' or perhaps 'the road'. By the simple device of placing the title in the lower case and slightly changing the translation, it would appear that we are only talking about a

highway, rather than a revolutionary religious sect. Take a look at this translation of the same verse from the Montgomery New Testament, for an example:

‘Go,’ said Jesus, ‘your own faith has saved you,’ and immediately he received his sight, and began to follow Jesus along the road.^{B9}

See how easy it is to deliberately mistranslate a verse? The simplest of alterations can place an entirely different meaning on the text, for here we have a new follower of the Church and he is simply following Jesus along a strip of paved surface designed for carts and donkeys! But it is the Christian priesthood and their translators who are the donkeys, for that is not what ‘The Way’ means and a couple of verses in John and Acts makes the true translation perfectly

clear.

But this I confess unto thee, that after The Way, which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our fathers.

Jesus said unto him, I am The Way, the truth, and the life.[B10](#)

In the clearest possible terms these verses are indicating that ‘The Way’ was a reference to Jesus’ own religious sect, not a road, and thus it should be written as a proper name and given capitals in the time-honoured fashion.*¹ Of the twenty-eight Bibles that I used in this research, only eleven translated the verse from Acts of the Apostles correctly, and only one translated the verse in the Gospel of Mark correctly. Whether that obfuscation is through deliberate deceit or plain ignorance, what it does is to separate the characters in the New

Testament from the community at Qumran and, indeed, from the Galilean Sect who were based in the eastern provinces of Syrio-Judaea. *2 But new recruits did not follow Jesus down a dusty road, they followed him as members of The Way, and The Way was a reference to the Essene sect at Qumran (Damascus).

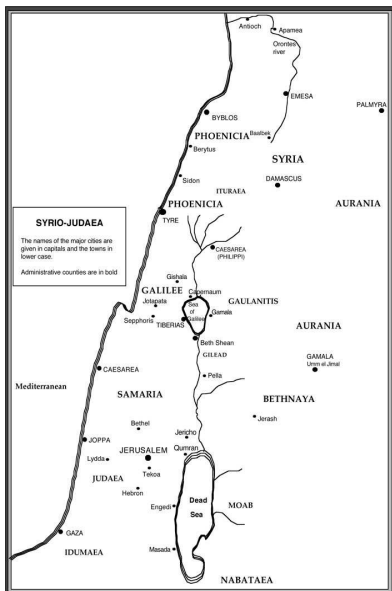


Fig 3.1 Map of Judaeo-Syria.

‘The Way’ was not simply a reference to a path towards enlightenment. While it is true that this title was derived from *odos* ὁδός meaning ‘path’ or ‘road’, the true meaning is likely to have been *hodegos* ὁδηγός meaning

‘guide’ or ‘teacher’, one who guides you along your way. The principal hero of the Essene was, of course, the Teacher of Righteousness, and so the members of the sect were probably known for being the ‘Followers of the Teacher’, which has been interpreted as The Way.

The community at Qumran may also be closely linked to the numerous occasions in which the New Testament gospels talk of people being in the ‘wilderness’. John the Baptist was the first of these, of whom it is said:

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea. [B13](#)

The modern literature at the site at Qumran is very keen to link John the Baptist as being a member of Qumran sect, and not without good reason. Although there is no archaeological

evidence of a famous preacher called John at Qumran, their teachings sound very similar to those of the Baptist. Confirmation of John's links with the Essene comes firstly from the writings of Saul-Josephus, who says of John's philosophy and of Essene teaching:

John's teaching:

... to exercise justice towards men and piety towards god.[J14](#)

Essene teaching:

... to exercise piety towards god and justice towards men.[J15](#)

In addition, the Essene Community Rule refers to a purification prior to entering the covenant (the sacred contract or agreement made before entering the community), and that covenant involved baptism in 'seas and rivers'. This cleansing is also thought to have taken place daily

within the seven large ritual baths at Qumran that were designed for ritual cleansing. Since the community at Qumran probably never totalled more than 200, it is clear that daily cleansing was vitally important to the community, which is part of the reason why the term '*saba*' became synonymous with bathing. The Community Rule says:

He shall be cleansed of all his sins by the spirit of holiness ... and when his flesh is sprinkled with purifying water and sanctified with cleansing water, it shall be made clean by the humble submission of his soul.¹⁶

As Professor Geza Vermes himself confirms, this entry into the community and the daily cleansing was 'like the baptism of Jesus and John'.

John the Baptist

John was said to have been the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth, the sister of Mary,*³ the mother of Jesus. Very little is said of John's life, but what is said gives the impression that he was an ascetic who lived in the deserts eating locusts and wild honey. This is the convenient, rustic imagery that the clergy would like to impress upon us but, of course, it bears no relationship whatsoever with reality. The 'wilderness', as we have already seen, was much more likely to have been a reference to Qumran, the monastery and private Judaic school that was located in the wilderness of the Dead Sea. John's 'animal skin' dress and ascetic diet have been hopelessly translated too. The pertinent verses read, in the English:

And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and


his meat was locusts and wild honey ... And (many) were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.^{B17}



Fig 3.2 The Archbishop of Canterbury's 1991 enthronement robes. The design is clearly that of the Eye of Ra (or the Evil Eye).

The raiment of camel's hair is interesting, because Camal (Gamal נמל) was the surname of Jesus of Gamala. The name of Gamala (the city he came from) means 'camel', and this Hebrew word is the root of the English pronunciation.

Actually, this is a little misleading, for the word originally referred

not to an animal, but a country – for Egypt was called Kam . In this case, the phrase ‘camel’s hair’ (or thread) may well have meant ‘Egyptian cloth’, and probably referred to the ultra fine and very expensive cloth of the advanced Egyptian weavers.

So why was John the Baptist said to be wearing ‘Egyptian cloth’? This is likely to have been a very old biblical tradition that goes back some fourteen or fifteen centuries *before* the life of John. What this sentence is actually referring to is the *kutoneth pasim* כְּתֹנֶת פָּסִים, or the ‘coat of many colours’ that was worn by the Old Testament Joseph. This in itself may be a mistranslation, for this term can be equally translated as ‘long striped coat’ or even ‘coat of many ornaments’; in fact, those ‘ornaments’ may have been *passil* פָּסִיל rather than

passim פס"ם, giving us a 'coat of many idols', which would make a great deal of sense in an Egyptian context.

Whatever

the exact translation, the fact remains that the Old Testament Joseph became the High Priest of Heliopolis, the highest rank in the most prestigious of the Egyptian temples, and he was also the prime minister of all Egypt and only second in rank and power to the pharaoh; and ten percent of all the tax revenues from all of Egypt went into Joseph's coffers. Joseph was an incredibly rich and



Fig 3.3 Detail from those robes, showing the Eye of Ra.

influential person in the richest country in the world at that time, and so you can be assured that the ‘coat of many idols’ that Joseph wore would have been as dazzling, ornate and expensive as any tunic worn today by the Archbishop of Canterbury, if not much more so. Being of Egyptian origin and usage, the term ‘idols’ is probably appropriate, as a priest’s cope in that era would have been embroidered with the imagery of the Eye of Ra, woven in pure silver and gold with a myriad of precious stones and gold filigree. Actually, during his 1991 enthronement, the then Archbishop of Canterbury wore a cope embroidered with the Eye of Ra – it even has a blue iris in the center, just like the modern eyes of Ra that protect wearers from the Evil Eye.

John the Baptist was therefore a

priest, who aspired to be as great as the illustrious patriarch Joseph, and no doubt the theology he preached had as much of an Egyptian flavour as Joseph's once did. But, if John's coat can throw up a host of alternate and interesting meanings, so too can the locusts and honey, for this too is a mistranslation. As it happens, the *akris* ἀκρίς (locusts) can also refer to the 'first fruits', the pick of the crop that was always given to the priesthood as an offering to the gods. As the venerable theologian Adam Clarke says:

Locusts may either signify the insect called the locust, or the top of a plant. Many eminent commentators are of the latter opinion ... The Greeks customarily selected from the topmost part of the heaps (of fruits) and offered this to the gods.¹⁸

John was not existing on insects, but

the pick of the crop. That the latter was the true meaning of this sentence can be seen in the very next verses, which say:

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, 'O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance.'^{B19}

Here, John the Baptist was telling the aristocracy and merchants of Jerusalem, who had come to pay homage to him, to bring the *akroyinion* ἀκροθιῖον the 'first fruits' (not the locusts) that were due to the Temple. John is placing himself on a par with the Temple priesthood in Jerusalem, despite his remote location in the 'wilderness' of Qumran, and is demanding equal respect and equal sacrifice from his potential followers,

if they wish to utilise him to converse with the god(s). Thus the locusts were indeed the ‘first fruits’ and so the complete verses from Matthew should read:

And the same John had his priest's cope robes of fine Egyptian cloth, and a leather apron (or leopard-skin) about his waist; and his food was the first fruits of the sacrifice and wild honey ... And (many) were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.²⁰

This revised meaning is as far from the original as it is possible to get. John was not some hairy, wide-eyed ascetic who lived in a cave and spoke in guttural grunts, like some half-naked hermit



character out of
The Life of Brian;
he was an
Egyptian priest in
exile who wore
the Israelite's
priestly robes and
the masonic

Fig

3.4 Pharaoh

*Aye dressed in a
traditional
leopard-skin,
just as John the
Baptist would
have worn.*

leather apron or leopard-skin of the
traditional Egyptian priesthood, and
whose followers brought him the finest
foods of the offering table. He was
educated, wise, and hugely influential,
being the tutor of Simon Magus and the
christ or king who preceded Jesus:

And behold, one of the disciples of John
asserted that John was the Christ and not
Jesus, because Jesus declared that Jesus was
greater than all men and all prophets. (As he
did in Math 11:11) (author's brackets).[21](#)

Dating methodology

The evidence seems to suggest that there is a lot of commonality between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Essene community at Qumran, and therefore there should be many similarities between the characters in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the characters in the New Testament. However, with the team in charge of their translation having kept the scrolls behind closed doors for nearly fifty years, there was a growing clamour in the press for their general release. The keepers of the scrolls were eventually forced to relent, but since their publication might undermine many of the Christian texts it would appear that their fall-back strategy was to chronologically divorce the scrolls from the New Testament.

Professor Solomon Birnbaum had begun this strategy back in the 1960s with his paleographic analysis of the scrolls. Having carefully studied the calligraphy of each scroll, and subjected his results to a bizarre mathematical formula, he declared that he had derived precise dates for each of the scrolls. Needless to say, these dates were nearly all in the centuries BC, a finding which conveniently separated the Dead Sea Scrolls from New Testament events.

The unscientific nature of these findings was underscored by many professionals in the field, for it completely ignored the basic purpose of a scribal school within a monastery. Birnbaum had assumed that calligraphic styles evolve in a linear fashion, but of course a religious scribe may well be striving for an

authentic look, and thus using a classical style of font instead of a modern one. Even within my relatively recent school education, many of my early writing lessons concentrated on italics; and so if we were to use Birnbaum's technique on these jottings, my English compositions must have been created somewhere back in the sixteenth century, as were all my school certificates! Perhaps Professor Eisenman describes the position most clearly:

It must be stated here once and for all that the so-called paleographical evidence is wholly inadmissible in this discussion.²³

However, the damage by Birnbaum *et al* was done, and there are still those who refuse to accept that the scrolls could be referring to New Testament times, including Giza Vermes himself:

It is my belief that the ministry of the Teacher of Righteousness took place during the historical period dominated by the two Maccabee brothers, Jonathan and Simon (c. 160 - 130 BC).²⁴

However, the majority of scholars reject all such hypotheses (of a link to Jesus and Saul) for the simple reason that they believe the Qumran writings all predate the birth of Jesus...²⁵

The latter quote especially seems more like a statement of faith than science – I don't believe it can be so, so it can't be so! But the evidence seems to be clear, as even Giza Vermes has to admit in a later chapter. Having confidently placed the Dead Sea Scrolls in the second century BC, Vermes then notes that the greaves worn by the soldiers in the War Scroll were introduced by Julius Caesar; and the reference to a Kittim (Roman) king must refer to the Imperial era: or after Julius Caesar had

become caesar (king). Likewise, the reference to the Kittim being the rulers of the world would again have to be a reference to a post-Julius Caesar era.

It is abundantly clear that the Kittim were the Romans and only in the post-Julius era did Rome expand its empire to encompass most of the known world; so the earliest the War Scroll could have been written is about 30 BC. There is also conflict with the Kittim, and so we are looking for an era in which there was a Roman invasion of Judaea. The Romans first invaded Judaea in 63 BC, when Pompeius Magnus accepted an invitation by Aristobulus II to rescue him, but this was prior to the Roman Imperial era. The next occasion when there was a major war between Jewish rebels and the Roman army was the Jewish War of AD 67 - 70.

When searching for a revolutionary era that was post 30 BC, an era that does not appear to be ruled by a Judaic king (King Herod), we necessarily arrive into the AD 60s and the (revised) New Testament period. Thus the War Scroll, and most probably all the other Dead Sea Scrolls, were relating the events of the (revised) New Testament revolutionary struggle of the AD 60s – a struggle where the Essene rebels opposed both the Jerusalem priesthood (the Wicked Priest) and the Romans (the Kittim). In the Scroll texts we are looking for a charismatic and revolutionary leader from a small sect of Judaeans revolutionaries, the Teacher of Righteousness (Teacher of Zadok or Justus), and who fits this role better than Jesus (Justus)? Professor Eisenman is in no doubt that the

Scrolls refer to the (revised) New Testament era:

It should be appreciated that an allusion to 'the last priests of Jerusalem' ... makes no sense anytime before the destruction of the Temple in AD 70.

There is no possibility such wholesale destruction of the High Priestly clans can be read into any events prior to AD 68-70.³⁰

But this late date gives Eisenman a problem: a direct challenge to his own open-mindedness. With regard to the identity of the primary players in this drama, the obvious answer that first springs to mind – bearing in mind that the hierarchy of the Essene was composed of twelve priests – is that the Teacher of Righteousness was a reference to Jesus himself, while the Spouter of Lies was none other than the devious Saul-Josephus, as we shall see shortly. This association is doubly

possible when we realise that when Saul rode off to 'Damascus' with a summons for the arrest of the 'people of the Way', he was actually going to Qumran. Qumran was called 'Damascus' and both the Essene and the Galilean Church of Jesus and James referred to themselves as 'The Way', as we have already seen.

However, this association would mean that Jesus and Saul-Josephus were crossing swords, both figuratively and literally, in AD 68, some 35 years after Jesus is said to have died on the cross. Despite Eisenman's plaintive plea for open-mindedness, this is a step too far for the puzzled professor, and he can no longer maintain his own ideals. He is now confined to a deep quandary enclosed by his own dogma.

In James, the Brother of Jesus

Eisenman says that the chronology suits James being the Teacher of Righteousness more than it does Jesus.³¹ This identification is supported by the fact that the title used for the Teacher of Righteousness can be directly translated as ‘Teacher of Justus’, and James was, of course, called James Justus. In addition, Eusebius and Origen both quote from passages in Josephus’ various books – which are no longer extant in modern copies – which both state that James was known for his ‘righteousness’, which is no doubt why he was given the title ‘Justus’. These references look suspiciously like interpolations, but they do indicate that the early Church fathers knew James as ‘James the Righteous’ (James Justus).

However, whichever way Professor Eisenman wants to wriggle

on this one, the Essene Teacher cannot be James because James died in AD 62 or 66, and the Habakkuk *peshet* and others are definitely describing events of Jewish War of AD 68 - 70, as Eisenman himself has just argued. Thus we have a strange situation in Eisenman's later work, *The New Testament Code*, where he again proves the late date for the Scrolls, and describes all manner of similarities and associations between the Scrolls and the New Testament, but dare not name the Teacher nor the Spouter of Lies – for to do so would prove that Jesus was alive in AD 70!

However, Eisenman probably knows the truth, if he could ever believe it, for it would not have escaped his attention that one of the greatest enemies of Saul-Josephus, in his secular accounts of the Jewish War,

was one Justus of Tiberias. Later in this book I will be equating this Justus of Tiberias with the biblical Jesus himself and so the title 'Justus' must have been common to all the brothers of Jesus, as we have seen.

This would make a great deal of sense, for the Galilean Sect was founded by Judas of Gamala and Zadok, and the Essene were an offshoot of this sect. However, Zadok צדק means 'righteous' and it can also be translated as Justus Ιουστος. Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus), being the son of Judas, would not only have been associated with the Essene, but may have inherited the same titles; and so Jesus would have been called 'Jesus Justus' in much the same manner as James was. We shall see more evidence for this later.

But if the Teacher of

Righteousness (Teacher of Justus) was Jesus-Justus, and the main enemy of Jesus within Acts of the Apostles was Saul, then surely the enemy of the Teacher of Righteousness must also be Saul. This bitter enemy of the Teacher had several sobriquets, including the 'Liar', the 'Spouter of Lies', the 'Wicked Priest' and the 'Windbag' who provided a 'service of vanity' and a 'worthless service' that 'poured out wind'. The very specific title of the 'Wicked Priest' demonstrates that this person was not a secular leader, like the Roman procurators of Judaea, but a priest who was probably of a Judaic sect. Had the 'Wicked Priest' been of a different religion entirely, his views would have been disregarded as simply being Pagan. So we are looking for a priestly leader of a rival Judaic-style religion who was regarded as a

liar and a windbag, and we can find just such a character in the guise of Saul-Josephus. It is not a coincidence, therefore, that Saul defends himself against similar such accusations of lying by saying that:

Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not).[B32](#)

Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.[B33](#)

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knows that I lie not.[B34](#)

But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not made up by man.[B35](#)

Saul was highly sensitive to accusations of lying and for good reason, for these accusations were being flung in his direction by the

Essene leadership at Qumran. According to the Scrolls, the followers of this Spouter of Lies were called the 'seekers of smooth things', the 'removers of boundaries' and the 'lovers of wealth'. These are all titles that can be linked to Saul-Josephus and his new Church of Simple Judaism. They were indeed looking for a 'smooth' life instead of the personal hardships of traditional Judaism, they 'removed the boundaries' of Mosaic Law and lived by the simple rules of the Ten Commandments, and the followers of Saul most certainly did not pool their wealth as did the Essene. In fact, it seems that Saul grew rather rich out of the donations made by his followers. More tellingly, perhaps, it is said of this Wicked Priest that the Essene despised:

He was 'called by the name of truth' when he

first appeared, but on becoming a ruler he betrayed god for the sake of riches and defiled himself with wealth amassed by robbing ... the peoples. He led many astray in order to 'build his city of vanity with blood and to raise a congregation on deceit'. He robbed the poor of their possessions, but god punished him by delivering him to the hands of his enemies so that he should be humbled.³⁶

Saul-Josephus was indeed the priest who initially came to the Church of Jesus and James in the name of truth, but then went his own way and amassed great wealth from the people he 'led astray'. He did indeed use blood in a curious ritual that orthodox Jews could never have participated in. He was also captured by his enemies, the Romans, and humbled before Vespasian and Titus. All of these many points would strongly indicate that Saul-Josephus was indeed the Spouter of Lies, and thus the Qumran (Damascus) texts must be

contemporary with the (revised) New Testament era of the AD 60s.

If readers would care to dispute these arguments and the revised chronology for the Scrolls, then I would recommend a 'swift' peruse of *James, the Brother of Jesus* by Professor Eisenman, who lays out page after page of doctrinal, epigraphic and historical reasons why many of the Scrolls were written in the late 60s AD, and why the Teacher of Righteousness and the Spouter of Lies therefore have to be sobriquets for James and Saul respectively. These are comprehensive and compelling arguments, but Eisenman is wrong in one important respect. The Teacher of Righteousness cannot be James because he died in the mid AD 60s, and so the Teacher was actually Jesus himself. We have already seen some evidence pointing

towards Jesus being alive during the Jewish War of AD 67 - 70, but an entire flock of further evidence will be given in later chapters. The Teacher was most definitely Jesus-Justus himself.

This, then, is the primary reason for the Catholic Church to be wary of the Dead Sea Scrolls, for they directly undermine the authority of the Church. The Church want to hide the fact that very founder of Christianity, Saul-Josephus, was a congenital liar who had been cast out of the original Galilean Church of Jesus and James for distorting their doctrines, denying the law of Moses, opposing circumcision and for preaching nonsense about Jesus and his supposed resurrection. In addition, Saul-Josephus was having a bitter dispute with Jesus (Justus) in the late 60s AD, some thirty years after Jesus was

supposed to have died! It is no wonder that Father de Vaux was treading carefully in his translations of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

That Jesus was alive in AD 69 and later may seem impossible, given Church doctrine, but there are numerous pointers that indicate that this is absolutely true. We shall come across many of these in the course of this book, but a simple example involves the death of John the Baptist's father, Zacharias, son of Barachias. The Gospel of Matthew records Jesus as fuming at the chief priests of the Temple who had murdered Zacharias in the middle of the Temple:

... murdered Zacharias son of Barachias ...
whom ye slew between the Temple and the
altar.[B37](#)

As we might expect, Saul-Josephus

records a very similar event where one Zacharias, son of Baruch is also murdered in the middle of the Temple:

...they fell upon Zacharias (the son of Baruch) in the middle of the Temple, and slew him. [J38](#)

One might very well expect Jesus to complain bitterly about the death of Zacharias, for he was Jesus' uncle (Mary the Virgin and Elisabeth were reputed to have been sisters), so he had a genuine reason to be upset. But the clergy will simply not entertain any connection between these two characters and their identical deaths in the middle of the Temple, and for two reasons.

Firstly, Josephus records that Zacharias ben Baruch was very rich and was also 'one of the most eminent citizens (of Jerusalem)', while John,

Jesus and his many disciples were supposed to be very poor and downtrodden wretches. To have this same aristocrat as the father of John the Baptist and closely linked to Jesus himself, would have been 'awkward' to say the least. However, as we shall see shortly, both Jesus and Mary Magdalene and many of the disciples were also very rich and influential. Readers may be incredulous at this proposition, especially as the Church has preached the complete reverse of this for centuries, but it will be demonstrated to be true.

Secondly, the event that Josephus was describing happened in AD 68 or 69. Therefore, as both William Whiston and Adam Clarke point out, these two Zachariases could not be the same person, because Jesus died some 35 years before Zacharias

was murdered, and so Jesus could not have been speaking of his death (except, perhaps, by prophecy). Again the 'open minds' snap shut, and the obvious solution is vehemently denied.

In truth, these two Zachariases were indeed the same individual and the only alteration we need to our new version of biblical history, in order to make sense of it all, is for Jesus to be a prince or king who was alive and well in AD 69. We shall meet this Zacharias in a later chapter where we will find that the name of his other son is rather surprising. So remember this name, and the fact that Jesus lamented his demise.

Radiocarbon

Despite the evidence, many scholars refuse to accept these comprehensive

analyses and arguments about the Scroll's chronology, and have rigidly stuck to their BC dating. In an effort to release the logjam, Professor Eisenman and others pressed for up-to-date radiocarbon dating of the scrolls. However, this carbon-dating, which was performed in 1995, spectacularly failed to quell the controversy. Unfortunately, researchers like Eisenman, who claimed a first century AD heritage for the Scrolls, were rather left out of the process, leading to claims of dirty tricks and underhand dealings, while the results themselves were highly contentious and self-contradictory. Eisenman in particular was highly scathing about the entire process and its results, declaring:

(The dating process) was not carried out with the normal safeguards necessary for such evidence, namely the use of double or triple

blinds, objective selection and conveyance of materials by persons not party to the debate.

Both labs overtly framed their reports to attack the opponents of, and defend those sponsoring, the tests.

Where results were arrived at that were at odds with expectations, they were simply dismissed. This problem is inherent even in the final reports, which go out of their way to overtly support theories of archaeology and paleography (which indicate a second century BC date for the Scrolls).

The second tests were totally skewed. A sample of the Community Rule, a document with precise parallels to known materials about John the Baptist, produced a date of 134-230 AD, while a second sample (of the same document) was dated to 346-317 BC. The Habakkuk Pesher, which is clearly a Roman Era document, produced dates of 154-143 BC and 120-5 BC.³⁹

Eisenman is not only highly suspicious about the secretive manner in which the tests were conducted, the results themselves were internally inconsistent

and therefore inadmissible. The Community Rule scroll, for instance, has a 480-year spread within results from the same document. This is clearly demonstrating that either the procedures and controls used in the sampling were totally inadequate, or the sample itself may have been contaminated. Carbon-dating is a notoriously fickle process and the sample can easily draw in contaminants from its environment. Any carbon-compound contaminants, be that sweat from sticky fingers, soot from a recent fire or limestone from a wall, will affect the results. Recent carbon, like sweat or wood smoke, will make the sample appear younger, while limestone or coal smoke will age it considerably; and it has to be said that most of these scrolls were hardly kept in sterile conditions prior

to the carbon-dating being carried out.

All in all, the attempt to settle this debate and dispute with radiocarbon dating was an abject failure, and the failure itself was fostered by a lack of scientific objectivity. Science – and a modern investigation into history is as akin to a science as one can get – is a child of objectivity, born of impartial and open-minded parents. The essence of good science is to adapt the theory to suit the results, not adapt the results to fit the theory. Unfortunately, upon this dating of the Dead Sea Scrolls rests an entire religion, or at least an entire view as to how that religion should be perceived, and so most of the parties involved in these investigations are far from objective in their arguments, theories and methodology. So the analysis of the Dead Sea Scrolls has

been an absolute farce from beginning to end, with the facts being amended to suit the theory (or creed). Apparently, 5% of the scrolls have never been released, and one wonders what kind of texts are being withheld from us, even to this day.

Jewish Revolt

Incidentally, it is probably worth explaining the reasons for the Jewish War, and therefore explain why the revolt's key players may well be linked to the Dead Sea Scrolls. This entire revolution may have been formulated by the Galilean Sect in order to place their leader and king, the biblical Jesus, upon the throne of Syrio-Judaea and thence on the throne of Rome. But that may not have been the entire reasoning. Every revolution

needs a spark, to spur the entire population into leaving their jobs and taking up arms, and perhaps the personal fortunes of Jesus and his family were not compelling enough to foment a revolution. What Jesus needed was an excuse that would galvanise the population, and he found it in Roman taxation.

When Jesus' father, Judas-Zamaris of Gamala, had set up his small kingdom to the east of Syria and Jordan, on the fringes of the Badiyat esh Sham desert of Arabia, he had been assured that it would be tax-free. The first revolt that this family started was way back in AD 7, when governor Quirinius decreed that all the lands should be taxed. This was the biblical taxation event that is familiar to us from the gospel accounts. This revolution was actually subdued by

governor Quintilian, the previous governor, which makes me think that the chronology is uncertain here. It would appear that Judas-Zamaris of Gamala won that particular revolt against taxation, for Saul-Josephus says:

Herod (Herod Archelous?) also agreed to let him (Judas-Zamaris) hold the country (Bethanya) free from tribute (tax), and that they should dwell entirely without paying such customs as used to be paid, and gave it him tax-free.

The Babylonian (Judas-Zamaris)*⁴ was induced by these offers to come here; so he took possession of the land (Bethanya), and built in it fortresses and a village, and named it Bathyra ... and the country became full of people, by reason of their universal freedom from taxes. This continued during the life of Herod; but when Philip, who was (tetrarch) took the government after him (after Archelous), he made them pay some small taxes, and that for a little while only. And Agrippa the Great (Agrippa I), and his son of the same name (Agrippa II), although they

harassed them greatly, yet would they not take their liberty away. (But) the Romans have now taken the government into their own hands, they gave them the privilege of their freedom, but oppress them entirely with the imposition of taxes.^{J40}

So here we have it in a nutshell. Judas-Zamaris ^{*5} (of Gamala) was induced to set up and populate an entirely new principality along the eastern fringes of modern Syria and Jordan with the promise that it would be tax-free; but successive governors, kings and administrators sought to renege on that deal. This new principality of Bethanya and Auranian was conceived and created to guard the Judaeian eastern borders from the Parthians, which is why it was allowed to maintain its own army, but later Judaeian and Roman leaders probably envied their resultant wealth, and were looking to harvest some tribute (taxes).

None of the Judaeen tetrarchs and kings were really successful in this enterprise, for the power-base and army of Judas-Zamaris (of Gamala) and his sons *6 was simply too powerful. However, the Romans were about to change all of this, and they were powerful enough to demand and receive taxes from this tax-haven of the east. This is why Jesus is reported as surrendering taxes to Rome:

The Pharisees and Herodians came to set a trap for him (Jesus) ... and they said to him, Master, we know that you are honest, and are afraid of no man: for you pay no regard to a man's position, but teach the way of God honestly. (But) is it lawful to give tribute (taxes) to Caesar, or not? Shall we pay, or shall we not pay? But Jesus, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why do you test me? Bring me a coin, that I may see it. And they brought it. And he said to them, Whose is this image and title? And they said unto him, Caesar's. And Jesus replied, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to

God the things that are God's. And they were amazed at him. [B41](#)

It is clear that Jesus (of Gamala), the son of Judas-Zamaris, was being forced to give taxes to Rome, because the Romans were far more powerful than the previous tetrarchs and kings of Syrio-Judaea had been. (Or at least Saul-Josephus would like us and his Roman audience to think that Jesus was forced into giving taxes.) Not only that, but the Herodians of Judaea, backed up by the Romans, were rubbing this humiliation into Jesus' face.

This was not a situation that was going to last. These lands had been promised tax-free, but now that policy had been reversed and the largely despised Herodians were gleefully taunting Jesus and his people (in Bethanya). But taxes are universally unpopular and Jesus had his own army

of some 600 mounted archers plus infantry besides, and if the Herodians and Rome wanted a war, they could have it. In addition, there was always the ultimate prize that may drop out of the mayhem of revolution – the crown of Judaea or even the throne of Rome itself. Nero's rule was tottering by this late era, anyone could see that. What Rome needed was a firm but just and honest ruler, a Teacher of Righteousness who was of royal blood and of the line of Julius Caesar – Jesus was that hopeful candidate, and the Jewish War had begun.

New Testament equivalence

It is likely that the Dead Sea Scrolls date from this same revolutionary era, which is why the War Scroll against the Kittim (the Romans) was written.

And a link between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament is equally likely, for there are many similarities between the Church of Jesus and the Essene sect; as we have already seen with the discussion about 'The Way'. For instance, both sects pooled their money and lived out of a common purse (which was also one of the prime tenets of the Knights Templar, as we shall see shortly). Professor Geza Vermes says of the Essene:

One of the principal characteristics of the Essene was common ownership of property. New members handed over their belongings to the superiors ... the Essene received all that they needed (from the common purse).⁴²

But this is exactly what the Galilean Church of Jesus and James did, for they too ran a Communist regime akin to the modern Jewish Kibbutz. The

Acts of the Apostles is quite clear about this when it says:

Now the followers ... were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common ... There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet,*⁷ and distribution was made to each as any had need.^{B43}

Clearly, the Church of Jesus had the same regulations as the Essene, and with all these large donations the Galilean-Essene Sect(s) became quite wealthy. This is also true of the Boethusian Sect, which will be explored later, and the later Templars, which also became wealthy through patronage, donations and common ownership. Thus, the community that Jesus and the disciples managed (the

Galilean-Essene) was actually quite well off. Furthermore, in a later chapter we shall discover that, contrary to orthodox teaching, Jesus and Mary Magdalene were actually the wealthiest couple in Judaea.

The Essene and the early Christians also had many common beliefs and practices, such as dualism, light and darkness, immortality of the soul, healing, baptism, ritual meals and celibacy. More tellingly, the Essene were ruled by the ‘twelve’:

In the Council of the Community there shall be twelve men and three priests, perfectly versed in the Torah.⁴⁴

The similarity between the Essene twelve and the twelve disciples hardly needs labouring. In addition to this, the writings of the Essene used very familiar terms, like ‘saints’, ‘scribes’

and 'false prophets'; plus they used strikingly similar phraseology, like 'sons of light'⁴⁵, 'poor in spirit'⁴⁶, 'righteousness of god'⁴⁷ and 'works of the law'⁴⁸. These are specialist concepts that are peculiar to the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament, and this similarity again strongly points towards a common source and a common creed. More specifically, these phrases tend to be concentrated in the Epistles of Saul, which is why Father O'Connor has declared:

As (the Epistle to the Ephesians) shows, Saul was definitely in contact with someone who knew Essenian teaching thoroughly.⁴⁹

While in a similar vein Father Benoit has said:

The contacts with Qumran came less through John the Baptist and Jesus, than through Saul, John and even the faithful of the second

The mention of John (the Evangelist) here is due to the fact that the Gnostic dualism contained within the Gospel of John, with its constant reference to light and dark, is strongly reminiscent of the Dead Sea Scrolls. All in all, the similarities between the Essene texts and the New Testament are striking, while their common divergence from orthodox Judaism is likewise evident; and so most of these scrolls must surely date from the first century AD and the mission of Jesus and his disciples.

The greatest claim to this synergy actually comes from one of the original theologians who studied and translated the Dead Sea Scrolls – Monsieur Jozef Milik. In an interview with Robert Feather, a theological

researcher in the same mould as myself, he claimed to have discovered and excavated the body of John the Baptist at Qumran:

‘I excavated a corpse without a head. It was clear from the presence of brown dust that it must have (originally) been in a wooden coffin.’ (said Milik)

‘Who could it have been?’ (replied Feather)

‘John the Baptist, no doubt.’⁵¹

To be honest, given the paucity of the evidence unearthed in this particular excavation at Qumran, this identification has to be an unjustified leap of faith. Nevertheless, the tide seems to be turning and the remaining theologians who still argue that the Dead Sea Scrolls had nothing to do with the events described in the New Testament must be in error. The Dead Sea Scrolls were certainly Essene and

they most certainly had a great influence upon John the Baptist, the Gospel of John and especially upon the writings of Saul-Josephus.

The latter would not be so surprising if, as had already been speculated, Saul-Josephus had been a member (or student) of the Essene in his youth. Since Josephus Flavius then says the following of the Essene, it would seem to be a near certainty that Josephus was at some time linked to them:

These are the divine doctrines of the Essene ... which lay an unavoidable bait for those who have had a taste of their philosophy.^{J52}

Further evidence for gospel links to the Essene comes to us in the form of Manahem, a son of Judas-Zamaris of Gamala and therefore a brother of Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus).

Josephus reports that Manahem started the Jewish uprising by breaking into the fortress of Masada and purloining the contents of the armoury there.^{B53} The rebels, now fully armed, were now in a position to march on Jerusalem and confront the authorities.

One suspects that ‘Manahem’ is probably a title, for this important person does not get many mentions in the texts of Josephus and the name appears to have been derived from the Hebrew *maneh* מנה meaning ‘counting’ or ‘money’ (from which the English term is also derived). Remember that the entire dispute between the Galilean Sect and the Jerusalem authorities revolved around taxation, which is why Jesus was ridiculed for associating with ‘tax-collectors and sinners’.^{B54} (Some Bibles translate ‘tax-collector’ as ‘publican’, but the

primary meaning of *telones* τελωνης and *publicanus* is the former.) Therefore, a good nickname for the Galilean Sect might be the 'Bankers', which is why the character called Manahem was given this particular nickname. But this means that Manahem could actually be any of the sons of Judas-Zamaris of Gamala, including Jesus, James and Simon. It is also worth noting that an earlier Manahem, who lived during the reign of King Herod, was explicitly called an Essene, by Josephus.^{J55}

Eton of the east

What was this remote, rebellious Essene community, and what was it doing in such a desolate and isolated location at Qumran? Was it really a small monastery, as many maintain,

where the pious and holy could retreat away from the polluting effects of the big city? Qumran is only about 30 km from Jerusalem, so it is within easy commuting distance, but it is also a world away in terms of its geographical environment. Qumran lies on the northwestern shores of the Dead Sea, in the middle of a desert, with very little in the way of habitation around it. Here, in the desolation of the wilderness, the monks may have been free to contemplate their god and the cosmos, untainted by the evils of the big city.

While this common assumption of a monastic retreat is a distinct possibility for the role of Qumran, an alternative view is perhaps given by Saul-Josephus, who says of the Essene:

These Essenes ... neglect wedlock, but

choose other person's children, while they are pliable, and fit for learning, and esteem them to be of their kindred, and form them according to their own manners.^{J57}

This makes it sound as if the Essene took in orphans, which is entirely possible if they had sufficient funding from rich sponsors in Jerusalem to fund this charitable work. However, there are passages in the works of Saul-Josephus that make it appear as if he too was taken in by the Essene; but it is unlikely that Saul-Josephus was an orphan. Although he never mentions meeting with his family, at some point during the late AD 60s he says that he received a letter from his parents, and he also records their imprisonment during the siege of Jerusalem. So although Saul-Josephus was not an orphan, because his parents were still alive in the late 60s, he does appear to

have been separated from them even during his youth. The gospels say that Saul was born in Tarsus, but this may only be a reference to his being lowered down the walls of 'Damascus' in a basket – for *tarsus* ταρσος means 'basket'. This is also a convenient biblical description, for Moses too was 'born in a basket'. However, we know little of Saul's or Josephus' early years, and so it is entirely possible that he was sent to Jerusalem for his education.

It is entirely possible, therefore, that a large part of the Qumran community was actually a fully functioning *yeshivah*, or a traditional boarding school for Jews. For millennia, the Jews have esteemed education above many other societies, and have regularly scrimped and saved so that their children could attend

college. But since not every town or village could afford such an institution, they were often organised into boarding schools that attracted children from a wide region. The main component of the curriculum was the Torah and the history of the Jewish people; in fact the curriculum was devised to mold students into becoming model Jews for the next generation. It may have been from this educational function that the people of Qumran were not simply called the 'Essene', but also the 'Yahad', a term which may have been derived from *yahad* יָהָד meaning 'to become a Jew'.

This may also be the reason for the huge number of texts found at Qumran, many of which contained numerous spelling mistakes. It is suggested, in the modern literature at the site, that the primary reason for the

burial of the Dead Sea Scrolls was that they contained so many mistakes; but they could not be burned or reused, as they were sacred texts, so they were buried instead. But this does not explain why a professional scriptorium in a monastery was creating scrolls that were so riddled with mistakes in the first place. Why such sloppy workmanship? The answer may lie in the possibility that Qumran was a *yeshivah* boarding school, and creating these texts was simply a part of the education for the young boys; and being students they would indeed have made many mistakes.

The students would also have needed desks for all this industrious scribbling, but the most common complaint from the archaeologists at Qumran is that the tables were far too small to have been used for writing.

They have argued that they were benches in a refectory instead, but the presence of ink-pots would argue against this. The simple answer is that the tables were deliberately made to be small because the scribes were equally small – they were just children enduring all the trials and tribulations of a religious boarding school.

This explanation would not only explain the vast hoard of texts found at Qumran, it would also explain the way in which the community survived. Life along the shores of the Dead Sea is far from easy, with water and food being in short supply. Pliny says that the Essene had ‘only palm trees for company’, which would imply that all their other foodstuffs were brought in from the more fertile lands around lake Galilee. But how did the Essene pay for these purchases? One way would

have been through the income surrendered to them by new members, but another source of income might well have been through fees for the education of pious young Jews, just as the Ivy League universities of America successfully do to this day. Qumran may have been the Eton of the east, and a convenient repository of indoctrination for the next generation of revolutionary Galilean Zealots.

Knights Templar

It is often said that the Essene were a peaceful band of pious monks, an idyllic vision that may initially seem to suit Jesus and his followers rather well. But from their fortifications, forge and their bellicose writings – which included the War Scroll – it is clear that the Essene were not always

peaceful.

The War Scroll, for instance, was a complete manual for fighting a final, armageddon-style battle between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness. The Essene would persuade the people of Jerusalem to fight this final battle, and the scroll gives every detail possible, from the style of the armour and weaponry to the order of battle on the field. Surprisingly, the Essene army would have looked, been armed and acted in a very similar manner to the Roman army, which gives us a good clue to the era in which this scroll was written. Similarly, the Kittim, the bitter enemy in this final battle against the Sons of Darkness, is clearly a reference to the Romans. According to the War Scroll, the Essene were about as peaceful as the German army on the eve of

Operation Barbarossa.⁵⁸

However, evidence will be shown later that demonstrates that Jesus and his followers were also revolutionaries who were similarly armed and ready to fight; for the Essene were simply a splinter-group from the Galilean Sect of Jesus of Gamala. The principal difference between the Galilean Sect and the Essene concerns the regularity of ritual bathing and the degree of personal abstinence and asceticism that was required in the latter sect. In the New Testament texts it was John the Baptist who was the ascetic, whereas Jesus was scorned for his indulgence:

For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He has a devil. The Son of man (Jesus) came eating and drinking, and they say, 'behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners.'^{B59}

John was the ascetic (an Essene), whereas Jesus was the royal prince who was partial to the occasional indulgence (a Galilean). Again, it was John who was known as the Baptist, while Jesus was more concerned with secular affairs:

Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples did)^{B60}

There is also an extract in a gospel fragment that came from Oxyrhynchos, which reports that Jesus entered the Temple of Jerusalem without bathing, for which he was chastised. In response, Jesus ridicules the priesthood for bathing and perfuming like whores and flute-players, while being full of wickedness like scorpions.⁶¹ It would seem that Jesus, as a leader of the Galilean Sect, was

not a dedicated Essene, and his royal connections would probably confirm that he was no ascetic.

Although the Sons of Light (the Essene) lost this great battle with the Kittim (the Romans), it is more than likely that small remnants of their community survived the devastation and preserved their regulations and ethos. The reason for thinking this is that the Essene's Community Rule seems to have a great deal in common with the later rules of the Knights Templar. Saul-Josephus provides us with a great list of rules for the Essene, which demonstrates his familiarity with the sect. Some of the equivalences between the Essene and Templar rules include:

1. To live without money.
2. To be clothed in white.
3. To be given a chord or rope.
4. To be accepted as 'family'.

5. To give yourself to the service of God.
6. To provide food & clothing for members.
7. To offer shelter from the Sun and offer water to the thirsty.
8. To act independently of ecclesiastical and secular rulers.
9. To provide means to fight for the faith.
10. To meditate every day at set times.
11. To embrace a higher calling.
12. To work at a profession.
13. Members are not allowed to lodge with other Orders.
14. Disobeying rules of the Order will lead to expulsion.
15. To obey the elders.
16. To bury the dead.^{J62}

The Essene and the Templars also had similar equivocal views on marriage, with Josephus Flavius first saying that the Essene were celibates who took in young orphans, and then saying that some of the Essene actually married and had children. Since female burials have been found at Qumran, he would seem to be correct about these 'exceptions' to the rule.

Stephen Hodge, in his book on the Essene, maintains that the Essene community were poor and did not use money, which may not sound very Templar-like.⁶³ However, while this may well have been true for individual members of the Essene, this does not mean the community itself was poor, and hoards of coins have been discovered at the Qumran site during excavations. As with the biblical disciples and the later Templars, money had to be surrendered from individuals to the Essene community, and although this meant that individual members were poor, the community itself could be rather wealthy; which is exactly what Acts says about the disciples in 4:32-35. This is why the Templars managed to call themselves the Poor Knights of Christ, while simultaneously being the wealthiest

corporation in all of Christendom and running a multinational banking system. The same goes, it would seem, for the Essene of Qumran, who likewise called themselves 'the poor'.

Hodge's analysis of the Essene community goes on to indicate that the defences at Qumran were hardly those required by a monastery of pacifist monks. True enough, and we have already seen other evidence of their martial ethos, but the warrior monks of the Knights Templar were hardly pacifist themselves. While Josephus is not entirely clear whether he regarded the Essene as warrior-monks or not, he does report that when travelling between cities the Essene carried nothing with them except for their weapons. Such a regulation sounds rather more Templar than Cistercian, and would again point towards a

community of warrior-monks who cherished their War Scroll (and ran a college at the same time).^{J64}

This continual equivalence between the Essene and the Templars would seem to be indicating that the community of the Essene were not totally wiped out by the Romans after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. Although Qumran and Masada were erased from the map by the Romans, it is known from the Community Rule that there were travelling Essene who stayed in smaller communities and lodgings in and around Judaea. So did some of these communities survive, to eventually donate their Community Rule to the Templars? This would seem to be highly likely and the evidence for this is to be seen in the two surviving scrolls of the Damascus Document that were not discovered

among the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947.

Incredibly, two other versions of the Damascus Document had already been discovered way back in 1896, in a Cairo synagogue, and these versions dated from the tenth and twelfth centuries AD. In other words, at the very time that the Templars were arriving in the Levant in 1118, there were newly inscribed copies of the Damascus Document already in circulation. Had there been copies of the Community Rule in circulation too, then the Templars would have had their constitution ready made for them. Thus the Templars may well have been latter-day Essene, who were now fighting Islam rather than the Kittim.

Moving on a few centuries, there are many writers who see an equivalence between the Templars and modern Masonry, with the latter simply

being an underground version of the former, after their forced dissolution on Friday October 13th 1307. But if this is so, and if my equivalences between the Templars and the Essene are also correct, then there ought to be a number of equivalences between the Essene and modern Masonry too. Not surprisingly, this is exactly what we find. Saul-Josephus says of the Essene:

And before (the initiate) is allowed to touch their common food, he is obliged to take tremendous oaths, that, in the first place, he will exercise piety towards God, and then that he will observe justice towards men, and that he will do no harm to any one, either of his own accord, or by the command of others; that he will always hate the wicked, and be assistant to the righteous; that he will ever show fidelity to all men, and especially to those in authority

... and that if he be in authority, he will at no time whatever abuse his authority, nor endeavor to outshine his subjects either in his garments, or any other finery; that he will be

perpetually a lover of truth, and propose to himself to reprove those that tell lies; that he will keep his hands clear from theft, and his soul from unlawful gains; and that he will neither conceal any thing from those of his own sect, nor disclose any of their doctrines to others, no, not even though someone should compel him so to do at the hazard of his life.

But for those that are caught in any heinous sins, they cast them out of their society; and he who is thus separated from them does often die after a miserable manner; for as he is bound by the oath he has taken, and by the customs he has been engaged in, he is not at liberty to partake of that food that he meets with elsewhere, but is forced to eat grass, and to famish his body with hunger, till he perish^{J65}

The comments about undertaking tremendous oaths; not to abuse authority nor outshine subordinates; not to disclose any secrets of the sect or face a miserable death, are all central tenets of Masonry. In fact, the entire paragraph could be drawn from a masonic initiation lecture, and so the

Essene do indeed appear to be distant forerunners to modern Masonry. (I should point out that the fearsome penalties of death mentioned in masonic initiations are only symbolic nowadays; however, it is entirely possible that individuals who transgress masonic rules and are expelled, may well be shunned and therefore lose social standing as a result.)

Galilean Sect

The Essene have already been linked to the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James through Judas-Zamaris of Gamala and Zadok, the founders of the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James. Not surprisingly, these two sects therefore seem to share many doctrinal similarities. Josephus says of the

Essene:

(The Jewish) war with the Romans gave abundant evidence what great souls they had ... although they were tortured and distorted, burnt and torn to pieces ... that they may be forced to blaspheme .. yet they could not be made to (do so).[J66](#)

Unsurprisingly, this description is rather similar to the one Josephus provides for the Galilean Sect, of which he says:

They do not value dying any kind of death, nor indeed do they heed the deaths of their relations and friends, nor can any such fear make them call any man lord.[J67](#)

Not only were the Essene armed, but these passages make them appear to have been akin to the Zealots and Sicarii, two further revolutionary groups who were closely linked to the Church of Jesus (the Galileans). This

is why Jesus' 'pacifist' biblical messianic movement contained Zealot and Sicarii revolutionaries among its governing elite – among the disciples themselves:

He called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve. Simon Peter and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes. And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.^{B68}

Simon Zelotes was obviously a Zealot, and therefore he may well have been Simon, the son of Judas-Zamaris of Gamala and the brother of Jesus of Gamala. The Galilean Sect, as we know, was founded by Judas-Zamaris of Gamala and succeeded by his son Jesus of Gamala, who we have already linked to the biblical Jesus. This would make Jesus a political as well

as a theological revolutionary, a fact that is obvious from even the briefest of glances at the gospels, where Jesus says:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.[B69](#)

Then he said. Now he that has a purse, let him take it, and likewise his wallet: and he that has (no money), let him sell his garment, and buy a sword.[B69](#)

But my enemies who would not allow me to reign over them, bring them here and kill them in front of me.[B69](#)

Like the Essene, the Galilean Church of Jesus and James was ready to do battle. But this was not a spiritual battle with swords of faith, this was a real assault on Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives by a self-declared king, as we shall see later. Likewise, Chapter IX further explores the

ruthless, warlike doctrines of the biblical Jesus.

There was one further similarity between the Galilean Sect and the Essene, and that was their dealing in finance. Saul-Josephus clearly states that the Galileans were allowed to set up a tax-free state in the East. (To be more accurate, they were allowed to tax themselves and keep those funds in Galilean coffers for the maintenance of their private army.) Similarly, Jesus was criticised for keeping the company of ‘tax-collectors *⁸ and sinners’, so the disciples and followers of Jesus were also intimately linked to the collection of taxes.^{B71} Since I maintain that Jesus and his disciples were the leaders of the Galilean Sect, this should not be so surprising.

However, readers may point towards Jesus’ upsetting the tables of

the moneylenders in the Jerusalem Temple, and argue that Jesus did not approve of tax collection. But if that was true, then why were his primary acquaintances tax-collectors? The truth of the matter is that Jesus may well have been upsetting the tables of rival tax-collectors, who were impinging upon his tax 'farmland'. *9

We also have another similarity with the Knights Templar here, for they too established a tax-free status, which was declared by Innocent II in a papal bull of 1139. This indemnity from taxes allowed the Templars to build up the largest banking operation in the Medieval world, a business which made the order stupendously rich. This might not sound like an equivalence to the life of Jesus, because we have been conditioned into believing that the biblical family were paupers.

However, we shall discover in later chapters that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were also very rich, and I have no doubt that much of that cash came from the banking activities that the Galilean Sect controlled.

It is no wonder that the King James Bible persistently used the word 'publican', instead of 'tax-collector'. While it may have seemed odd to the English ear that Jesus liked to indulge in a few beers every evening, this was a much easier image for the clergy to peddle than one of a hook-nosed Jesus, complete with curly side-locks of hair, sitting in his bank and demanding outlandish rates of interest on his loans. The clergy lie to us, daily, and sell us the story that we want to hear.

While this might seem like a preposterous suggestion, that Jesus was a rich Jewish banker who

demanded exorbitant rates of interest and persecuted the poor who could not pay, that is exactly what Jesus taught his followers. We have all heard of Jesus' parables, and they are generally about farming and simple folk, but if readers turn to Matt 25:14-30 they will find the parable of a businessman who travels abroad and entrusts his money to his servants. On his return he praised those servants who had made money on their investments; but one servant had simply buried the money and given it back to his master. The businessman then fulminated against this 'wicked and slothful' servant and demanded to know why he had not invested the money and obtained interest! Furious, the businessman ordered:

Take therefore the money from him, and give it unto him who has lots of money. For unto

every one that has shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that has not shall be taken away even that which he has. [B74](#)

So the moral of Jesus' parable is that:

- a. Banking and charging interest are honourable, worthy professions.
- b. Making money through investing in banks is ethical and worthy.
- c. Employees who don't make enough money should be punished.
- d. The rich should be made even more prosperous.
- e. The poor should be made destitute.

This is not the usual parable for the Sunday sermon at the local Christian

church, of whatever denomination, which is why I say that we are being deceived; but this story does conform with and confirm the basic tenets of the Galilean Sect that Jesus and his disciples led. It also tallies very closely with the ideology of the Knights Templar, who were also not simply tolerant of usury (banking) but masters of the craft. Once again we see distinct similarities between the biblical Galileans, their ascetic offshoot known as the Essene and the later Templars, and so the latter is likely to be descended from the former.

Walking on water

That John the Baptist and Jesus-Justus were indeed linked to the Essene at Qumran is further confirmed by the location of Jesus' teachings. There are

several verses within these texts that indicate that John, Jesus and someone known as the 'Egyptian False Prophet' took several thousand followers out into the wilderness.

John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.[B75](#)

Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.[B76](#)

And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying; This is a desert place (a wilderness), and ... we have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and ... and they did all eat, and were filled ... and they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.[B77](#)

Are you not that Egyptian, which before these days made an uproar, and led out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?[B78](#)

On each occasion the Greek word *eremos* ἐρημος is used in these verses to mean 'wilderness' or even 'desert'. Note also that the five thousand followers in the wilderness story is repeated in Acts of the Apostles, except this time the event was being led by the Egyptian False Prophet. It is clear from all the other books I have written in this series, that Jesus was of Egyptian heritage and descent, and this is why he is being called the 'Egyptian False Prophet' in this verse.

The supposed miracle of the loaves and fishes, which seems rather peculiar at first reading, has already been fully explained as being 'knowledge of Pisces'; for in this very era, in the early part of the first century, Aries faded in the precessional zodiac and Pisces became dominant. This precessional

effect is caused by the wobble of the Earth, and the coincidence here between Pisces becoming dominant during the Heliacal rising (dawn rising) at the vernal equinox (spring equinox) and the loaves and fishes story, is striking to say the least. Early Judaism, and the Essene in particular, were greatly interested in the study of the zodiac, and so it would seem to be abundantly clear that Jesus was simply giving his followers the knowledge (the bread) of the new 'Great Month' of the era of Pisces (the fishes).

This gathering was also strongly connected with the Star Prophecy, which predicted the coming of a new messiah, a new king. This prophecy, as were many prophecies, would have been timed by the movement of the heavens, and this was an especially auspicious era in which something

might occur. The constellation of Aries was fading, and Pisces was coming into the ascendance; it was the beginning of a new precessional 'Great Month'. This only occurs once every two thousand years or so, as our planet slowly wobbles in its orbit, and so the early first century AD would have been a very special occasion indeed.

If any king (a christ or messiah) was going to rise in the east, this momentous event would surely happen at the beginning of the new Great Month. This is probably what Jesus was explaining to the five thousand, and he, of course, was that new messiah or christ, the new king of the east who would take over the whole of the known world. This was the messianic (royal) message – Jesus had been anointed as King Jesus (Christ Jesus).

Where, though, did this great gathering in the desert really happen? When this particular verse is mentioned in a church service, it is easy to believe that Jesus and his disciples had just popped out of Jerusalem or Tiberias for a few hours, and visited a local hill (it is always portrayed as a hill). Then, after lunch, they all go home. But this is not so, for the same verses make it clear that the other disciples were concerned that there were so many people and they were in a desert location (a wilderness) and so they suggested sending people to get more food.

The question is, therefore, where is there a desert location where John the Baptist may well have been teaching at one time, and where Jesus could have secretly spoken to several thousand followers about the secret

movement of the heavens in the precession of the zodiac? Indeed, where could one get a really good view of the rising Sun in Judaea, which is how the celestial movement of precession has to be observed?

The answer to all of these questions is a location on the west bank of the Dead Sea at Qumran. Remember that Qumran is only a day's journey from Jerusalem, and so the multitude were in no great danger of starvation in the desert. But, unlike Jerusalem, Qumran is most certainly a desert location, a monastery in the 'wilderness'. Jerusalem is pretty arid as a location for a capital city, but nevertheless olive trees and scrubby bushes will grow fairly well there, even without irrigation. However, if we journey eastwards a few miles we begin to drop downwards by a

considerable amount into the rift valley of the Dead Sea basin (the Dead Sea is over 400 m below sea level). Suddenly, one enters a real wilderness: a true desert with the occasional palm oasis.

That this was the location for this gathering is perhaps confirmed by a common name used for a ‘wilderness’ in the Tanakh, especially within the Book of Isaiah, which is an *arabah* ערבה meaning ‘desert’. However, in Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic, the Arabah specifically refers to the Dead Sea rift valley, from the Red Sea northwards. Both Petra and the Wadi Rum lie within the Arabah, as does the Dead Sea itself.⁷⁹ It is more than likely, therefore, that the ‘wilderness’ (*arabah*) that Jesus retired to with his disciples and five thousand followers was located on the

shores of the Dead Sea, which is probably why the Community Rule of Qumran referred to ‘preparing The Way in the wilderness’ – ‘The Way’ being a reference to the Church of Jesus and James, as has already been explained.

This suggestion is probably confirmed by the *Clementine Recognitions*. This text details the killing of James, the brother of Jesus. It then goes on to document the flight of his followers, where it says:

Then before daylight we went down to Jericho, to the number of 5,000 men.⁸⁰

The inference here is that there was another imperative for this journey into the wilderness by the four or five thousand: namely, that the Jerusalem authorities were on their tail. It was at this point in time that Saul (Josephus)

was, according to the *Recognitions*, authorised to go after the fleeing 5,000 and arrest their leaders. So where did these two groups go to? *Recognitions* says that the 5,000 went to Jericho, which just happens to be just a few kilometers north of Qumran. *Recognitions* (and also Acts) then goes on to say that Saul, who was pursuing the 5,000 in order to arrest them, went to Damascus, which is about 90 degrees in the wrong direction. Quite plainly, the 5,000 went to Qumran and so did Saul in his pursuit, and so Qumran was definitely called Damascus.

Thus the wilderness of Qumran is quite probably the true location for the biblical 'feeding the five thousand' story. The evidence that most comprehensively confirms this suggestion is given in the next few

verses of the Gospel of Matthew. The text goes on to say that the disciples were pressured, quite reluctantly, into a boat:

And straightway Jesus forced his disciples to get into a ship; and to go the other side, while he went up into a mountain apart to pray. And when the evening was come ... the ship was now in the midst of the sea ... and in the morning Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.^{B81}

So the disciples were forced onto a boat, much against their better judgement, and then at a later time Jesus came to them 'walking on the water'. The fact that there was 'another side' to this body of water means that this must have been a lake; but this could not have been a reference to the Sea of Galilee for this particular lake was in a desert, as Mark 6:32 makes clear, and the regions

around the Sea of Galilee are far from being a desert. The only desert with a lake in it, in this region, is the Dead Sea.

Since we have already closely linked this ‘wilderness’ location with Qumran, it is quite certain that these verses were describing a voyage on the Dead Sea. The confirmation of this is the fact that the Dead Sea is perhaps the only body of water in the world where one can do something very akin to ‘walking on water’. Due to the density of the Dead Sea’s salt water, it is easy to float with much of the upper body out of the water, and likewise to ‘swim’ in a curious fashion with most of the torso similarly out of the water. Jesus was not ‘walking on the water’, he was floating on the Dead Sea.

It would seem that this miracle was no more than a charade, designed

to fool anyone who had never seen the Dead Sea before, that god could make someone instantly light and buoyant. And this is a trick that might easily fool the gullible; for the Dead Sea does indeed look like a freshwater lake, apart from a few salt deposits on its shoreline. So why should the people in this lake suddenly look like corks in a bath, floating so ridiculously high in the water? Surely this is god's work! But if this is what really happened all those years ago, then this trick did not just fool a few city bumpkins from Jerusalem, it has also duped hundreds of millions of people in our more enlightened era. A whole new religion, based upon a party-trick!

However, this is not the end of these Saturday-night charades, for a later chapter will describe an even more important biblical 'miracle' that

turns out to be a deliberate and well-known first century AD party-trick. It would appear that the Galilean Sect, and the cult of Simple Judaism that followed in its footsteps, was led by the equivalent of David Copperfield or David Blaine. Oh the shame of it all, that mankind can be so easily fooled and led astray.

Satellite communities

In addition to Qumran, it is known that there were other Essene villages in Judaea, or that there were Essene supporters in other towns and villages. Essene priests and followers used to journey to these other locations without carrying any baggage, in the sure knowledge that they would be looked after by their brothers in the next village. The only thing that they did

take with them was their weapons, as we have seen.

One of the locations that the Essene may well have travelled to is Tiberias on the western shores of Yam Kinneret (Lake Galilee). This town was said to have been governed, during the AD 50s and 60s, by Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus). If the Essene were linked with the Galilean Sect, as appears likely, it is possible that they would have had strong links with Tiberias.

Evidence for this can probably be seen at the ancient remains known today as Hamat Teverya, which was built on the site of some hot springs that well up almost on the lake shore. The remains are of what appears to be a fourth century synagogue, which lies on top of an older site that dates back to the first century AD. One of the most

interesting discoveries on the site was a large mosaic floor, which has inscriptions that confirm that this was indeed a synagogue.

The reason for the doubts is that the major feature on this mosaic is a large zodiac, which modern theologians cannot rationalise with orthodox Judaism. But, as I have pointed out in many of my other books, the Judaism practised between the first millennium BC and the first few centuries AD was a very different animal to the one that we see today. The zodiac was clearly a central part of ancient Judaism, and the fact that there was growing resistance to astrology in the early centuries of the first millennium AD is demonstrated by the accounts of Saul-Josephus. Saul-Josephus, as the army commander in charge of Galilee, was sent out by the

Jerusalem authorities to Hamat
Teverya:

I came to a certain village called Bethmaus, four furlongs distant from Tiberius ... I told them that I was sent to them by the people of Jerusalem as a legate ... in order to persuade them to demolish the house which Herod the tetrarch had built there, and which had the figures of living creatures in it, although our laws have forbidden us to make any such figures. But for a good while Capellus and the principal men belonging to the city would not give us permission, but were at length entirely overcome by us. So Jesus the son of Sapphias (Gamala), one of those whom we have already mentioned as the leader of a seditious tumult of mariners and poor people, prevented us, and took with him certain Galileans, and set the entire palace on fire.^{J84}

The synagogue and its zodiac at Hamat Teverya are indeed about 2 km from the center of Tiberias, and so this quote from Josephus may well be speaking of this very same location. It is likely that Herod the Tetrarch would have built a

palace complex around the luxury of a hot spring, which still flows today, and so again this is a likely location for Josephus' visit. Saul-Josephus was seeking to destroy the 'figures of living creatures' within the palace and here at Hamat Teverya we most certainly have images of living creatures on this site.*10

The present mosaic zodiac is thought to be fourth century, but there is no reason why this mosaic could not have been a copy or a repair of a much earlier mosaic. And I say this with some confidence for, although I do not know by what method this mosaic was dated, it is an indisputable fact that the precessional date marked by the head of the Sun-god Helios marks the first century AD. In other words, this may be the very same mosaic that Saul-Josephus was looking for.



Fig 3.5 Judaeo-Christian mosaic of the zodiac at Hamat Teverya, Galilee. Helios the Sun (Jesus) is depicted in the center of the zodiac, surrounded by the twelve constellations (disciples).

The date of this mosaic can be ascertained from the position of the head of Helios, the Sun-god in the

center of the zodiac, which lies directly under the conjunction between the constellations of Aries and Pisces. In addition, Helios' head lies at the very apex of this mosaic, exactly at the twelve o'clock position. This precise orientation is obviously stating to viewers that this position is very important, and it is, for this placement very neatly confirms that this zodiac was created in the early first century AD: for that is exactly where the Sun should be at the vernal equinox (the spring equinox or vernal point) in that very era. A few centuries later, during the fourth century era proposed by archaeologists, the Sun would have moved into the constellation of Pisces, and the head of Helios would have needed repositioning accordingly. But no, this is not what we find; instead, the head of Helios is pointing precisely

to a date at the beginning of the first century.

The Hamat mosaic is not a zodiac at all, it is a millennial clock, and the hour hand of this clock, the head of Helios, is pointing directly at AD 10. This is firm evidence that the priests of this synagogue knew exactly what they were venerating. A messiah or king was expected at the beginning of the new Great Month, and this zodiac is clearly denoting the start of the new Great Month of Pisces. Therefore, the central figure in the zodiac may not be Helios, as such, but the expected messiah – King Jesus, complete with ‘Christian’ halo.

Saul-Josephus claims that Jesus of Sapphias (and Gamala - the biblical Jesus) burned down the palace in order to discover gold, but I am sure that there are much more efficient ways of

getting gold from a palace than setting fire to it. No, the reason why Jesus set fire to the palace was to prevent Saul-Josephus from seeing the 'Pagan' images inside, which were considered blasphemous by the orthodox Jerusalem Temple authorities and may have provoked a big investigation and some arrests if discovered. The simplest, if most destructive, solution was to burn the place down.

Again we see in this quotation that Saul-Josephus says that this Jesus (of Sapphias-Gamala) was the leader of a band of rebel mariners, or fishermen. We know that the biblical Jesus was known as a revolutionary and was closely identified with fishing. And, of course, the symbol of Saul's Simple Judaism (Christianity) was and is the fish. This is why I have so confidently said that Jesus of

Sapphias-Gamala was the biblical Jesus – for how many revolutionary leaders from Galilee called Jesus were known by the symbol of the fish? Clearly, this was the biblical Jesus.

In reality, the fish symbolism for Simple Judaism had nothing to do with Jesus employing fishermen, and everything to do with the symbols of the zodiac. And here, at Hamat Teverya, we can see why the symbol of Pisces was so important; because the very center of the synagogue was adorned with a huge circle of the zodiac and the primary point of that zodiac marks the start of the Great Month of Pisces. This is probably why we zeroed the year-count at this time too, for we are merely counting off the years since the start of the Great Month.

Since the authorities at the

Temple of Jerusalem were obviously not impressed with this great mosaic of a zodiac, we can be sure that this synagogue was not entirely an orthodox place of Jewish worship. It was closely associated with Herod the Tetrarch (Herod Antipas), so the beliefs of this king must also have been highly unorthodox, and obviously allied in some manner to the Galilean Sect. It was the Galileans who were closely associated with Egyptian theology, which was intimately involved in the study of the heavens, and so here at Hamat Teverya we can see that Jesus must have been fully conversant with Egyptian astrology and the zodiac.

This site at Hamat Teverya was probably also linked with the Essene, and for three reasons. Firstly, the center of the zodiac is adorned with an

image of Helios,^{*11} the Greek Sun-god riding on his chariot. Not only would this imagery have been 'Pagan' in the eyes of the Jerusalem priesthood, it was also a reference to the Sun, while the calendar of orthodox Judaism is Lunar. So which faction of Judaism would have been looking towards a Solar calendar, instead of a Lunar one? The answer is the Essene, of whom it is said:

A calendar based on the Sun is mentioned and described in detail in some scrolls, such as 4QMMT, Songs of the Sabbath and the Mishmarot. These scrolls indicate that the Qumran sect had a solar calendar with a 364-day year.⁸⁵

Secondly, the base of the zodiac at Hamat Teverya is adorned with two large lions, and within Judaism these lions are the symbol of the tribe of Judah. This symbology comes from

Jacob, who said of his son, Judah:

Judah is a lion's cub. From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down, he crouched as a lion, as a lioness. Who will rouse him?^{B86}

In a later chapter, we shall see evidence for this same lion symbolism in Wales, where it may denote the royal line of David and Jesus, who were both of the tribe of Judah. However, the Essene also identified themselves with Judah:

All those who observe the Law in the House of Judah (the community of Qumran), whom god will deliver from the House of Judgement because of their suffering and because of their faith in the Teacher of Righteousness.⁸⁷

Some of the scrolls apply the title 'House of Judah' to the (Essene) sect (symbolising the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and the Levites), whereas Jews outside the sect are called the 'House of Joseph'.⁸⁸

The lions of Hamat Teverya therefore demonstrate a direct relationship to the tribe of Judah and most probably to the Essene too.

The final element of evidence on the zodiac, which may connect it to the Essene Sect, is one of the symbols in the top register. Within this section there are a number of well-known Judaic symbols, including the *menorah* candelabra, the *shofar* ram's horn, the four sacred plants in a bunch (the myrtle, willow, palm and citron) and finally there is what looks like a small spade. Rather cruelly, Saul-Josephus says of this unusual implement:

... they give (the Essene initiate) a small spade ... they dig a small pit, a foot deep, with a spade (the same kind of hatchet that is given them when they are first admitted among the Essene); and covering themselves round with their garment, that they may not affront the divine rays of light, they ease

themselves (defecate) into that pit.^{J90}

The spade is being described as a mundane, secular tool for digging a latrine. But if this spade is the same implement that is displayed so prominently on the zodiac at Hamat Teverya, then Josephus has to be playing a cruel joke here. Would a tool for digging latrines really be a sacred symbol to be placed next to the sacred menorah? I feel not.



Fig 3.6

*The incense burner of the Essene (left),
and from Hamat Teverya (right).*

In actual fact, the spade has horns on

each corner, as do all Israelite altars, which identifies this as being a sacred implement. These horns can be clearly seen in the zodiac mosaic. A number of these 'spades' have been uncovered in the many excavations in and around Syrio-Judaea, and they are actually Judaic incense burners, which is why this was one of the first items given to Essene initiates. Incense is placed upon the spade, which is then heated over a flame, and no doubt this was an important component of Essene ritual. However, the fact that Saul-Josephus was so ready to ridicule this implement demonstrates how far he had strayed from the Essene and the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James.

Cosmos


All in all, the links just described

would seem to strongly indicate that this zodiac in the synagogue (and palace) that lies just to the south of Tiberias was closely linked in some manner to the Essene community or to Essene thought and teachings. However, since this palace was also central to the jurisdiction of Jesus (of Gamala, the biblical Jesus), who was governor of Tiberias, then he probably knew of these 'images of animals'. This not only gives us yet another link between Jesus and the Essene, it also explains a great deal about the more obscure elements of the New Testament narrative. In Matthew Chapter 4, for instance, Jesus is tempted in the 'wilderness' by the 'devil':

The devil took Jesus up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms (territories) of the world and the majesty

(preeminence) of them. 'All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.'^{B91}

Is this really part of a 'temptation' by a malevolent, spiritual being, an evil god that the normal god(s) cannot fully control? The suggestion is not simply unlikely, it is absurd.

More realistically, it is entirely possible that this 'devil' or *diablos* διαβολος has been taken from *diablepo* διαβλεπω which refers to seeing through something or, by implication, a 'visionary' or 'seer'. Meanwhile, the Greek (*h*)*orus* ορος for 'mountain' was taken from the Hebrew *har* (*hor*) הר and the Egyptian *har* , which both mean 'mountain' and were also used in connection with the pyramids. That the latter is the correct interpretation is confirmed by the reference to '40 days and nights' in

these verses, which is a coded reference to the Great Pyramid, as will be explained later.

Furthermore, it is an indisputable fact that 'kingdom' has been very badly mistranslated from *kosmos* κόσμος meaning 'cosmos' or 'heaven'; and so it is likely that the verse was actually speaking of the heavens above, rather than the earthly kingdoms of mortal monarchs below. Of course, it has already been demonstrated in my previous works that the platform on top of the Great Pyramid was the premier astronomical observatory in the ancient world, and so this connection between the Great Pyramid and the cosmos is only natural. Having made these alterations this verse now makes perfect sense, and it was really trying to convey to us that:

An astronomer-priest (and teacher) took Jesus up the Great Pyramid, and showed him all the astrological houses (kingdoms or territories) of the cosmos and the majesty (preeminence) of them.

Jesus had been taught the intricacies of the zodiac and precession, and he was later to pass this information onto his disciples. This is why the disciples came to Jesus and said:

Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign at thy coming, and at the end of the world? [B92](#)

Again we see an obvious error here, for 'world' was derived from *aiwn* αἰών and a much better translation in this context would be 'age'. In reality, this verse represents another discussion about the zodiac and the precession of the equinox, for the disciples were trying to grasp which astrological signs were dominant in

which precessional age. The 'age' was therefore a reference to the Great Month, the 2,150-year era that was 'ruled' by a particular astrological constellation. Knowing this, this verse should actually be read as:

Tell us, when shall these things be? What was the sign of zodiac when you were born, and what will be the sign of the zodiac at the end of the age (at the end of the Great Month)?

The simple answer that Jesus would have given to the disciples is 'Aries and Pisces'. As readers can appreciate, much of the New Testament actually refers to astrology, and this is why Christianity has adopted a great deal of covert astrological symbolism throughout its ritual. As an illustration, Christian iconography of Jesus will invariably show him with either a cross or the darting rays of the Sun (a

halo) behind his head. But this imagery has simply been taken from the standard Greek zodiac, as can be seen in figs 3.5 and 3.7. The imagery in the Hamat Teverya zodiac shows Helios (the Sun) in the center of the twelve constellations; but exactly the same imagery was borrowed and used to depict Jesus (the Sun or son) surrounded by twelve disciples. For now, think of this depiction as the equivalent of a circular Last Supper table, with positions for twelve disciples – the reason for this will become apparent later.

Thus the cross behind Jesus' head is not symbolic of the crucifixion cross, nor is it simply symbolic of the rays of the Sun, it is actually the cross of the zodiac: the cross where the four lines of the seasons meet at the center of nearly every zodiac and planisphere

(but not shown on the Hamat Teverya zodiac). In this symbolism, therefore, Jesus the ‘Sun of God’ (*sic*) is depicted as Helios (or Sol Invicta) at the center of the astrological cosmos.

This identification of the zodiac as a central component of the New Testament accounts, and therefore of the teachings and theology of the Church of Jesus and James, will become important in a later chapter that discusses the magnificent Temple of the Zodiac in Chester, England.

Jesus fragment

Another reason for the Dead Sea Scroll guardians treading carefully with their translations was the discovery of 4Q246, a small section of parchment that became known as the ‘Son of God fragment’ or even the

‘Jesus fragment’. The text here was interesting, as it mentioned the familiar appellation of the ‘Son of God’.

Col. I (DSST, 138)

1. [...] settled upon him and he fell before the throne
2. [...] eternal king. You are angry and your years
3. [...] they will see you, and all shall come for ever.
4. [...] great, oppression will come upon the earth
5. [...] and great slaughter in the city
6. [...] king of Assyria and of Egypt
7. [...] and he will be great over the earth
8. [...] they will do, and all will serve
9. [...] great will he be called and he will be designated by his name.

Col. II

1. He will be called Son of God, and they will call him Son of the Most High. Like the sparks
2. of a vision, so will their kingdom be; they will rule several years over
3. the earth and crush everything; a people will crush another people, and a city another city.

4. ... Until the people of God arises and makes everyone rest from the sword.
5. His kingdom will be an eternal kingdom, and all his paths in truth and uprigh[tness].
6. The earth (will be) in truth and all will make peace. The sword will cease on the earth,
7. and all the cities will pay him homage. He is a great God among the gods (?).
8. He will make war with him; he will place the peoples in his hand and cast away everyone before him.
9. His kingdom will be an eternal kingdom, and all the abysses.⁹³

This phraseology is interesting, for the terms ‘Son of God’ and ‘Son of the Most High’ are not from the Old Testament but from the New. Again, we have the curious spectacle of learned theologians desperately pushing the argument that the Dead Sea Scrolls were written in the first or second centuries BC and thus nothing to do with the Jesus story, while the texts themselves use overtly New Testament

terms and titles. These theologians will even divert attention by using the lower case 'son of God' when it is quite obvious that this is a title and should be capitalised as 'Son of God', even if one does not believe that this 'son' referred to Jesus himself.

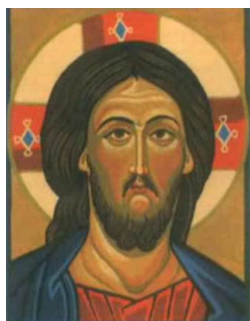


Fig 3.7 Head of Jesus, with the cross of the zodiac behind.

Then there is the wording and context of this fragment, which gives even those who argue for an association with Jesus a problem. The vast majority of theologians still like to cling to the belief that Jesus was an

impoverished carpenter, and so it is argued that the second king in column

one and the son in column two refer to different individuals. This makes it appear as if two people were being referred to here: a king (of Assyria and Egypt) and a predicted Son of God who will bring peace and righteousness. But within the New Testament, Jesus was given the titles 'christ' and 'messiah', and while many may perceive these as some kind of esoteric, spiritual title, at the fundamental level both of them merely refer to the 'anointed one' or the 'king'. This is why Jesus was called the King of the Jews – for he was indeed a real king. But if Jesus was a king then perhaps columns one and two should really be seen as descriptions of the same person.

A further problem is the fact that this king is somehow linked to both Egypt and Assyria. Even the most

radical of theologians would have balked at this description, for this cannot be linked to the orthodox life of Jesus in any shape or form. However, I have already linked Jesus to Queen Thea Muse Ourania, the lost daughter of Queen Cleopatra who became queen of Parthia. This parentage means that Jesus was indeed descended from the thrones of both Egypt and Assyria (Parthia), and so we appear to have a complete solution to this 'Jesus fragment'.

I formulated this revised parentage for Jesus without having read the Jesus fragment (4Q246) and so the content of this small document not only confirms that the Dead Sea Scrolls refer to Jesus and to the events of the New Testament, but the fragment also confirms my theory that Jesus was a direct descendant of Queen Thea

Muse Ourania.

Summary

The Essenes were the Sons of Zadok, while the Galilean Sect was founded by Zadok.

The Essene teacher was called 'The Righteous' or 'Justus', while a title for James and Jesus was 'Justus'.

Qumran was a reference to Qumran, and 'The Way' was a reference to Jesus and his followers.

The Essenes seem identical to the Church of Jesus and James, especially in the common ownership of possessions.

The Dead Sea Scrolls were written in

the AD 60s and refer to the Jewish Revolt in this era.

his directly implies that the main events of the New Testament occurred in AD 65 - 70, and not the AD 30s.

he feeding of the 5,000 occurred at Qumran. It was a lecture about the precession of the equinox, and the rise of Pisces as the dominant constellation.

he next miracle in the Bible is the walking on water, which obviously happened in the Dead Sea; so this is less of a miracle and more of a partytrick.

he Galileans, Essene and the Church of Jesus venerated the zodiac, like the one discovered at Hamat Teverya, a

zodiac that marks a precessional
date in the first century AD.

*1 Curiously, the new European fusion research reactor in France is called Inter, the Latin for The Way, and its logo is the rising Sun. One cannot help feeling that this represents the same old battle between Jesus' gnostic (scientific) sect and the overt anti-science of Christianity; a battle that was to aptly depicted in Dan Brown's *Angels and Demons*. Note also that the King James Bible translates 'sect' as 'heresy', and so the Church of Jesus is a heresy!

*2 It will be demonstrated in a later chapter that the primary capital city of Jesus' small empire was actually Palmyra, which lies on the road from Emesa (Homs) to the Euphrates river and is some 300 km north of the city of Gamala (Umm el-Jimal). It is possible, therefore, that many of the references to 'Gamala', in the accounts of Saul-Josephus, refer more to Jesus' Egyptian nationality than the town. The name 'Gamala' (Kamara) was originally derived

from Kam  meaning 'Egypt'.

*3 Mary was said to be the kinswoman συγγενης of Elisabeth (sometimes translated as cousin). However, the Koran says that Mary was brought up by Zacharias (Elizabeth's husband) as her guardian. Luk 1:36, Koran 3:37, 3:44.

*4 This paragraph is actually about Zamaris, but note how he is being called 'the Babylonian'. However, in the very next chapter we then find a 'Babylonian Jew' called Judas performing the very same acts in the very same location with exactly the same private army and the same complaint about taxes. It is fairly obvious that Judas and Zamaris are the same person, with the name 'Judas' (*Ioudas* Ioudav) simply meaning 'the Jew' (*Ioudaios* Ioudaiov), which is what he was – an exotic Babylonian Jew to be more precise.

*5 Note that it was Judas-Zamaris who set up the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James, and it was a splinter-group from this sect that founded the Essenes.

*6 Judas-Zamaris' sons were called Jesus, James

and Simon, exactly the same names that were used by the biblical Jesus and his brothers.

*7 Property donations to the early Church were not always completely voluntary either. In Acts 5:4-11 it clearly states that St Peter had (High Priest?) Ananias and his wife Sapphira murdered because they did not give all their money to the Galilean Church, and held some back for themselves.

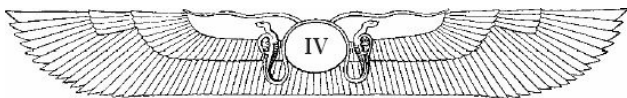
*8 In the King James Bible, these tax-collectors are called 'publicans', and *publicanus* is the Latin term for a tax-collector. The term being used for 'sinner' can also refer to the collection of taxes.

*9 Under Roman law, the aristocracy bought the rights to 'farm' taxes in a particular area, and were then free to 'farm' as many taxes from that area as they wished. The balance between the purchase cost of this privilege, and the revenues collected, was their profit margin. In the case of the Galilean Sect, the profit margin was 100% – a privilege worth protecting, with force if necessary.

*10 I don't think that it was just animals that the Jerusalem hierarchy were concerned about, for nearly every ancient mansion, church and synagogue

in Judaeo-Syria is full of mosaics of animals. What concerned the priesthood about Hamat Teverya is that this was a zodiac, a form of divination and worship that had obviously been outlawed by a priesthood that did not understand the Egyptian heritage of Judaism.

*11 The symbology of Helios on this mosaic may actually be an image of Yahibol, the Palmyran Sun-god. See Chapter XII.



Clement of Rome

Following the founding of what we now know as Christianity by Saul-Josephus, in the AD 50s, the fledgling church of Simple Judaism was unjustly persecuted and ruthlessly suppressed by the Romans all the way through to the reign of Emperor Constantine, in AD 306. That, at any rate, is the mythology.

In actual fact, far from being persecuted, the new creed of Simple Judaism owes its survival to Imperial patronage from its very earliest days.

Saul-Josephus was the instigator of Simple Judaism, and he was backed all the way by Emperor Vespasian, and it is not exactly hard to see why; for the alternative to Simple Judaism was orthodox Judaism, which was a divisive and separatist creed. There were many religions throughout the Roman Empire, and the golden rule was that each creed tolerated the other, and each regarded themselves as ultimately subservient to the emperor himself (the emperor being a manifestation of the state: the Empire itself). Thus all Romans could walk past temples to the numerous gods that they did not revere, enter a temple of their choice and pay both homage to the gods and tribute to the emperor. The key to a multi-theological empire was tolerance.

The Jews, however, were

different. They forbade their followers mixing with other races and creeds, they banned followers from eating Gentile foods, they were contemptuous of other religions, and they would not recognise the emperor (or the state) as being superior to their god. On top of all this, they had been stubbornly revolutionary and disruptive in refusing to pay Roman taxes, and some of their leaders claimed a royal ancestry that was more illustrious than any Roman from the patrician classes. The situation was as bad as the modern world faces, with the divisive superiority complex that is inherent within Islam – it was as intolerable then as it is now.

Simple Judaism, however, was different. Saul-Josephus, the autocratic leader of this new religion, was a poodle of the Flavian emperors; its

creed was Rome-friendly; it showed greater tolerance of other belief systems; it clearly stated that it would pay Roman taxes; it spoke Greek with Aramaic as a secondary language and it ate Roman foods at Roman dining tables. This final point, about eating with other Romans, was a hugely important issue in the Empire at this time. How can one have a united empire if one sad section of the community feels that they are so superior to everyone else that they will not handle or eat normal foods, and will not eat with normal people. St Peter, after a 'vision' (more probably a tongue-lashing from Saul-Josephus), eventually relented on this very topic:

Then Simon-Peter spoke to them, 'You all know that it is forbidden for a Jew to associate with, or even visit, a man of another nation. But God has shown me plainly that no man must be called common or unclean.^{B1}

Peter was being taught religious and cultural tolerance, not by Jesus, but by the egotistical Saul-Josephus! Back in Jerusalem, Simon-Peter then had to explain his actions to the other members of the more orthodox Galilean Sect:

So when Peter next visited Jerusalem the circumcision-party (the Church of Jesus) were full of criticism, saying to him, 'You actually went in and shared a meal with uncircumcised men!'.[B2](#)

This is a common theme that runs through both Acts and the Epistles, that there was a complete separation in Syrio-Judaea between the circumcised (the Jews) and the uncircumcised (everyone else). It was Saul-Josephus who was trying to break down that barrier by preaching Simple Judaism to the uncircumcised Gentiles, not the supposedly pacifist and liberal Jesus.

It was Saul-Josephus who was welcoming Gentiles into a new form of Judaism that did not require circumcision and did not divisively separate itself off from all the other communities of the Empire.

In addition to all this, if Emperor Vespasian clicked his fingers and demanded a change to Simple Judaism, Saul-Josephus would comply. This obedience of Simple Judaism was even evident during the reign of Emperor Constantine, in the early fourth century AD, when the Emperor unified and therefore considerably changed the entire creed of Simple Judaism without any significant uprising or revolution taking place. This, therefore, was a religion that Rome could deal with, and if it could be spread around the eastern provinces in preference to orthodox Judaism, so

much the better. Even if orthodox Jews could not be converted to this new creed, its mere presence within a region may halt and reverse the appeal and spread of the more divisive form of Judaism. Why join a difficult form of Judaism, when there was an easier one next door?

Contrary to popular perceptions, Simple Judaism (Christianity) was openly tolerated by the Flavian emperors, especially after Berenice, the sister-wife of King Herod Agrippa II, became the mistress of Emperor Titus. It was Berenice and Saul-Josephus, with their favoured status among the Imperial court, who were able to spread their new religion among the influential Romans of the patrician classes, not Jesus and James. However, some of the aristocracy may have had a foot in both camps, for it

was also Berenice who saved the life of the biblical Jesus on more than one occasion, and possibly even negotiated his eventual exile to England. This topic will be explored later.

From all this evangelism of Simple Judaism within the Imperial court, there was at least one high-profile success story, but one with a tragic ending. Eusebius reports that:

... in the fifteenth year of Domitian (AD 95), Flavia Domitilla, who was a niece of Titus Flavius Clemens, was exiled to the island of Pontia (Pandateria) along with many others, because of their testimony to Christ.³

So Flavia Domitilla was a follower of Simple Judaism. In fact, Cassius Dio says that Flavia Domitilla was actually the wife of Flavius Clemens, rather than the niece, and he was killed in this same purge:

Domitian slew among many others Flavius Clemens the consul, though he was his cousin and his wife was Flavia Domitilla, who was also a relative of the emperor (his sister's daughter). The complaint brought against them both was that of 'Atheism', under which many others who drifted into Jewish ways (most probably Simple Judaism) were condemned. Some of these were killed and the remainder were at least deprived of their property. Domitilla was merely banished to Pandateria.⁴

Is this not persecution of Simple Judaism (Christianity), readers might ask? Perhaps, but this was AD 95, the year before Domitian was murdered, and so this exile and execution was part of a much wider persecution that took place at that time. Changes in Roman leadership were always fraught with dangers and the potential for revolution, and the paranoid Emperor Domitian was busy purging various opposition groups who he thought (and

quite rightly so) were plotting to kill him. Tacitus writes that:

... the senate house is under siege, the senators locked in by soldiers, and that one fell stroke that sent so many a consular to death, so many a noble lady to exile or flight.⁵

This was not a pogrom against Simple Judaism by Domitian, it was the insecurity of an emperor who thought that everyone was out to get him. And he may well have been right about Flavius Clemens and Domitilla, for it was eventually their steward, Stephanos, who murdered him in AD 96.⁶ Note, however, the political level that Simple Judaism was obviously circulating and spreading within, prior to this minor hiccup. Flavia Domitilla was the wife of Titus Flavius Clemens and the niece of emperors Titus and Domitian.

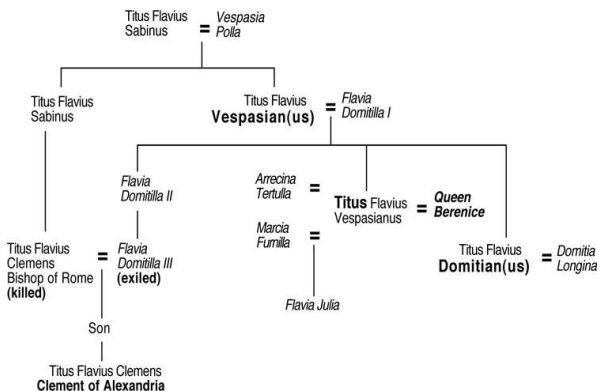


Fig 4.1 The Flavian family tree.

But this potential threat to the life of Emperor Domitian, from Flavius Clemens, was not simply from a cousin who dabbled in an obscure creed called Simple Judaism. Far from it, for it is strongly rumoured that Titus Flavius Clemens was actually Clement of Rome, who became bishop of Rome

(pope) during the tenth or twelfth year of the reign of Emperor Domitian (AD 91 or 93). Now we see the true nature of the threat to Domitian, for if Clemens was actually Pope Clement of a rapidly expanding Church of Simple Judaism, then he was in a position to make political comment on the rule of Domitian and threats to his future position; and emperors in this era were not always appreciative of criticism.

There are a great number of theologians who would disagree with this association, for there is a mention that Pope Clement lived on into the reign of Trajan. However, it would seem peculiar in the extreme that Emperor Domitian persecuted and murdered his cousin (Clemens) for Judaic-style beliefs (Simple Judaism), while letting the bishop of Rome (Pope Clement) – the leader of this very same

sect that he was supposed to be persecuting, who just happened to have the same name – live in some comfort in Rome. Surely if any Flavius Clemens (Clement) was killed at this time, it would have to be the pope himself. In which case, either the report of him being alive during the reign of Trajan is incorrect, or he did not die at the hands of his cousin. Perhaps he was simply jailed, or exiled along with his wife.

Note that Pope Clement (Titus Flavius Clemens) is often described as being an immediate successor to the apostles, and a co-worker with Saul-Josephus. Had the life of Jesus been centered around AD 30, which is what is claimed, then this would make Clement rather too old for an appointment to pope in the early AD 90s. This is yet another indication that

the important period in Jesus' life occurred in a much later era, say AD 65-70; a new chronology which would allow Pope Clement to be decidedly younger in the AD 90s.

From this analysis of early Church history, it would appear that Simple Judaism had struck gold, rather than persecution. It would seem that the nephew of the late Emperor Vespasian, who was married to Vespasian's

granddaughter, was the third ever bishop of Rome, the third pope. The Church of Simple Judaism was not

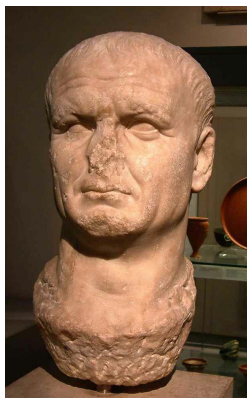


Fig 4.2 Bust of Emperor Vespasian.

being persecuted during this early era, but positively encouraged. Tertullian, for example, says that the Roman laws against Simple Judaism were:

Laws which Vespasian disregarded, though he had conquered the Jews; which Trajan set aside, when he forbade Christian-hunting; and which neither Hadrian, in spite of his obsessive interest in all that was mysterious, nor Pius ever ratified.⁷

Some persecution! Instead, the Church that was being actively persecuted by the Romans was actually the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James. Eusebius says of this persecution:

And their still survived of the lord's family the grandsons of Jude (Judas Iscariot), who was said to be Jesus' brother, humanly speaking. These were informed (to the authorities) as being of David's line and brought before Emperor Domitian, who was as afraid of the 'advent' (an appearance of a messiah or king) as Herod had been.⁸

The grandsons (probably sons) of Judas Iscariot pleaded before the Emperor that Jesus' 'kingdom' was actually in the heavens and not of this world, and they also claimed extreme poverty. Satisfied that they were not a threat to his throne, Domitian eventually allowed them to go free. This reaction gives us a good idea of what Jesus' original goal was – Domitian, like all emperors before him, was not afraid of a destitute mystic from the east with peculiar ideas about resurrection, but he was afraid of a real king from the east who just might establish a rival empire that was in conflict with his own. This fear was bolstered by the Star Prophecy: that a king would rise in the east to take over the Empire. Therefore, this conflict between Rome and the Galilean Sect may well have been part

of a dynastic battle for the throne to the Roman Empire, as we shall see. In which case, Jesus must have wielded sufficient power and authority as King of Judaea to dare topple even a mighty emperor.

The truth of the matter appears to be at variance with what we are usually told. After the fall of Jerusalem the Church of Simple Judaism was spreading throughout the Imperial family, with members becoming highly placed in the new Church; while the Galilean Sect and the family of Jesus was being systematically wiped out. This was the true level of persecution in this early era, and it was certainly not being aimed at the followers of Simple Judaism (Christianity).

Recognitions

The Clementine *Recognitions* and *Homilies* are two ancient texts that come out of the very beginnings of Christianity, and since their commentary and observations are sometimes used in this book, a little information about this source is perhaps necessary.

As with many of these biblical-style texts, and quite unlike their secular Roman counterparts, both the author and the date of compilation of these works are uncertain. They purport to be an auto-biography written by Clement of Rome, who the Catholic Encyclopaedia confidently identifies as Clement I, the Bishop of Rome. In other words, if my assessment of the Flavian family is correct, then *Recognitions* was written by Titus Flavius Clemens, the nephew of Emperor Vespasian. But Rev Thomas

Smith, the translator of *Recognitions* in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers Library*, further points towards a 2nd century AD recomposition by Bardaisan of Edessa. Yet this is a very interesting identification, as the next book in this trilogy, *Jesus, King of Edessa*, will positively identify Jesus as a prince of Edessa. (But don't despair, for this radical identification will not detract from anything that is discussed or claimed in this book.) Thus it is possible that some of the core material in *Recognitions* and *Homilies* not only goes back to the first century, but also goes all the way back to the original city from whence these stories and histories originated.

Recognitions and *Homilies* are said to be 'theological romances' which contain more or less the same material and storyline, although the

differences between the two manuscripts are so numerous that it is thought that two completely different groups may have been responsible for compiling them. Both are presumed to be works of complete fiction, written as a novel, but as we shall see later the profusion of historical and biblical information with these works is astounding, so they can hardly be described as fictional fairytales. Historical fiction might be a better description, with historical characters and events gathered together into a fictional colloid; but they may also be real historical accounts, with a fictional romance about Clement's travels and family bolted onto this otherwise factual story. Personally, I think the latter to be the more likely.

The story is supposedly set in the era of Emperor Tiberius, or

somewhere between AD 14 and AD 37, which it would have to say in order to remain within the boundaries of the classical biblical chronology. However, we shall see in the next book in this trilogy that the *Doctrine of Addai* did exactly the same thing and likewise nominated Tiberius as the reigning caesar; but Eusebius foolishly omitted to change the names of the governors of Syria in this other work, who were both governors in the AD 50s and 60s. *Recognitions* and *Homilies* are similar in that they go on to say that the disciple spreading the word of the new messiah and who eventually became the companion of Clement, was Barnabas; and yet the evangelical travels of Saul and Barnabas did not begin until the AD 50s. Likewise, the great debate at Caesarea, which is the central topic of both *Recognitions* and

Homilies, did not happen until the AD 60s, and we know this because they both relate the story of James being crippled or killed by 'the enemy' (ie: by Saul), and of Saul (Josephus) gaining his army commission - both of which did not happen until the AD 60s.

So *Recognitions* and *Homilies* are far more than straightforward fictional novels as they include long dissertations on Greek mythology and philosophy, some astronomy, astrology, geography, sociology and a large amount of detailed Judaic and Neoplatonic theology. Both are certainly the work of a great intellect, and they contain a nice little romantic 'Mills and Boon' storyline about the orphaned Clement finding his long-lost sibling and parents. This romantic detail obviously became a classic of the era, because it was eventually

reworked into the 13th century story of Mary Magdalene in *The Golden Legend*, as is explained in further detail in *Mary Magdalene, Princess of Orange*.

There is also an interesting detail about Clement being related to Emperor Tiberius, which again the storyline must say to stay within the orthodox chronology. But there is no evidence of a Clement being related to Tiberius. However, if we fast forward to the true date for the composition of this romance, which would have been after the Jewish Revolt of AD 70, we find that the emperor in this era did indeed have a nephew called Clement. That emperor was, of course, Vespasian rather than Tiberius.

However, even if we attribute these works to Clement of Rome, it is difficult to speculate why, from the

theological perspective, such a text would have been written. The problem here is not simply the storyline – which revolves around a theological dispute between Simon Magus and St Peter (Simon-Peter), which culminates in a great three-day debate in Caesarea attended by over 3,000 spectators – but the contentious arguments that are discussed. Incidentally, the *Acts of Peter and Paul* says that this debate was convened during the reign of Nero, so we are again talking about events that occurred during the all-important AD 60s.

The complex and often impenetrable details of this protracted, three-day debate in this ‘theological romance’ would be more understandable if the Simple Judaic Church was displayed in a favourable light, but the arguments put forward by

Simon Magus actually represent a devastating attack on both the Nazarene Ebionite and the Sauline Simple Judaic creeds, and their contradictory and confusing texts. These arguments also represent a devastating attack on Jesus' divinity and his position as god's number one prophet. Thus if this text was written by Titus Flavius Clemens, then he was not an orthodox follower of Simple Judaism and nor was he a conventional Nazarene. However, the arguments and debates contained in *Recognitions* do display some similarities with the reasoning in Irenaeus' *Against Heresies*, and also with those to be found in the later Grail romances. In other words, the great debate by King Evalach and Joseph of Arimathaea in the *History of the Holy Grail* from the *Vulgate Cycle*, may have been based upon the similar

debate between Simon-Peter and Simon Magus that is recorded in *Recognitions*.

It is implied in *Recognitions* that St Peter wins the arguments in this great debate and so Simon Magus is forced to slink away, minus his followers, to the city of Tyre. However, the arguments are, in reality, not convincingly won by Peter, and so the entire text can actually be read as a complete destruction of all the claims and arguments that the later Catholic Church has used over the millennia to beguile its followers. In addition, the very fact that a debate of this nature could be held at all would have been viewed as a direct attack on the authority of both of these sects, for nobody should be bold enough to attack a belief system quite so ferociously as does Simon Magus.

Indeed, given its content, it is surprising that this text has survived the centuries; and so the point of highlighting this text here, is to demonstrate that the Christianity we know today was not above scrutiny and criticism during first century.

Recognitions and *Homilies* also demonstrate that Simon Magus was a dualist and a polytheist, and he uses the Torah itself to prove that the Israelites and Jews have always been polytheists. Of many examples given, Simon Magus quotes the following verses:

For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God.[B9](#)

Then the lord god said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil.'[B10](#)

For the lord your god is god of gods and lord

of lords, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. [B14](#)

In the first two verses, man becomes the same as god, and therefore god cannot be unique. In the third verse, for god to be the god of gods is a direct acknowledgment that there must be other gods of a lower order. Simon could also have included the concept of Satan, who must be another god, or the Trinity, where there are three god-figures; but these elements of Christian monotheistic-polytheism (*sic*) are not mentioned for some reason. Simon Magus then goes on to pose some very awkward questions to Simon Peter. One of the trickiest is when he asks why Jesus wanted to bring a sword to the world, and why he wanted to set family members at each other's throats:

Never think I have come to bring peace upon

the earth. No, I have not come to bring peace but a sword! For I have come to set a man against his own father, a daughter against her own mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's enemies will be those who live in his own house.[B15](#)

This is, of course, an Nazarene-Ebionite teaching direct from the mouth of Jesus himself, but Simon-Peter was not able to defend it, apart from the usual theological dissembling and prevarication. Meanwhile Simon Magus, with a flourish of triumph, rounds on Jesus calling him 'wicked' for saying such a thing. Then an old man says to Simon Peter:

I say, then, that the world is not governed according to the providence of God, because we see that many things in it are done unjustly and disorderly; but I say that it is nature that does and regulates all things.[16](#)

This was another tricky observation

for Simon Peter to explain, for logic dictates that a god cannot be both omnipresent and all-powerful if evil still exists in the world, which it does. So, just as the old man said, one of these two fundamental pillars of classical religion has to be surrendered – either god is not always present, or he is not all-powerful. The third option is that god is simply evil, and delights in sending plagues and tsunamis upon mankind in the same way that a child likes stirring up an ants' nest, to see what all the ants will do about the latest calamity he has inflicted upon them. And while I was personally quite pleased to have formulated this logical rebuff to Judaeo-Christianity's omnipresent, omnipotent monotheism, I was brought back to Earth some years later by Simon Magus, who said to Peter at this

great debate:

It is still possible for me to infer from those evils which are done in this world, and are not corrected, either that the creator is powerless, if he cannot correct what is done amiss; or else if he does not wish to remove the evils, that he himself is evil. But if he neither can nor will (correct what is amiss), he is neither powerful nor good. (Recognitions 2:54.)

So Simon Magus had formulated the very same logic some 2,000 years previously, so there really is nothing new in this world. And by saying these heretical and blasphemous things, Simon Magus was showing himself to be a Neoplatonic Gnostic, whose philosophy claimed that the biblical god of creation was simply a demiurge - a lower-ranking god created by the uncreated and unknowable great god, who is above all the lower gods. And this is exactly how Simon Magus

describes his philosophy. Needless to say, Peter did not have a good answer for any of these questions either, and so Peter's singular god retained its schizophrenic flashes of good and evil.

These, and other arguments put forward by Simon Magus, represent an attack on both Jesus' Nazarene Judaism and Saul's Simple Judaism. But this is interesting, for Peter's rebuttals of these attacks are not very convincing (one suspects that this was the period when Peter was being heavily influenced by the theology of Saul). Thus the author of *Recognitions* was, in effect, attacking all the recognised Judaic theologies of the day, which might almost imply that the author of *Recognitions* was himself verging on Neoplatonism or even Atheism.

Perhaps this is why Cassius Dio reported that Titus Flavius Clemens

was executed for 'Atheism', as mentioned in a previous quote.¹⁷ Perhaps he was executed (or exiled) not for being a Sauline Simple Judaist pope, but for not being a very good one – a pope who had strayed into something akin to disbelief and Atheism, and had started writing about it too. It is entirely possible that some of the Christian 'persecutions' that Eusebius and other Church fathers document may actually represent the weeding out of heretical elements, possibly like Clement of Rome, who were not following the orthodox Simple Judaic creed. The persecution that the Catholic Church habitually complains of may have been internal discipline perpetrated by their own internal 'police' – a forerunner of the Catholic Inquisition and its modern equivalent, the Congregation for the

Doctrine of the Faith.

Simon Magus' attacks on Jesus' militancy, in the previous verses, are also interesting (if the reporting of this debate is correct, of course). If Simon Magus was originally of the Galilean Sect, and there is much to suggest he was, then he was against the martial, revolutionary ethos of the Galilean Sect that was being championed by Jesus himself, as we have just seen. Simon Magus was also a polytheist, and so if he was associated with the Galilean Sect then they too are likely to have been polytheist. This would not be so surprising, for Jesus was descended from the royal line of Egypt, and he was trying to establish himself and his family as a claimant to the throne of Judaea (and Rome, Egypt and Persia); and a former Egyptian is likely to have been partial to a little

polytheism.

One of the primary arguments against this hypothesis has always been that an Egyptian royal would not have been considered to be Judaic in any way, so in what manner would Jesus as a prince of Egypt have been considered to be a Jew? And if he was not considered to be a Jew, then how could he claim the throne of Judaea? The answer to this is that the Israelites were originally the Hyksos Egyptians of Lower Egypt, as I have previously demonstrated, and so their traditional heritage would have been Egyptian and somewhat polytheistic. This polytheism would, however, have been tempered by the iconoclast campaigns of Pharaoh Akhenaton, who sought to impose monotheism upon all of Egypt. But Akhenaton's campaign was incomplete, because he was deposed

and pushed out of Egypt, and it is this event that I equate with the (second) biblical exodus out of Egypt. As it happens, Akhenaton's brother was called TuthMoses, who I equate with the biblical Moses.

However, if all of this was true then one ought to be able to identify a strand of polytheism throughout early Judaism right into the New Testament era. This is patently true of the United Monarchy era of kings David and Solomon, of whom it is said:

Then Solomon built a high place (temple) for Chemosh, the idol of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem; and also for Molech, the idol of the children of Ammon. [B18](#)

So here was the illustrious King Solomon of the Jews building altars for the gods Chemosh and Molech. This, among many other such quotes

that I have given previously, demonstrates that the Jews' greatest monarchs were most definitely inclined towards a little polytheism. Note also that one of these idols was for the children of Ammon, who were, of course, the Upper Egyptians who worshipped the god Amun down in Thebes. Once again, we see this Egyptian influence upon the early Israelites. In fact, to take this theory to its ultimate conclusion, I demonstrate in the book *Solomon* that kings David and Solomon were actually Lower Egyptian pharaohs of the twenty-first dynasty – Psusennes and Sheshonq. Surprisingly enough, for such an audaciously Earth-shattering claim, there is an awful lot of data and evidence to support this assertion.

The United Monarchy was, therefore, inclined towards polytheism.

But now we can see arguments being made, supposedly in the first century AD, that the Galilean Sect were still polytheistic in some respects. Simon Magus says:

I say that there are many gods; but there is one incomprehensible and unknown to all, and that he is the god of all gods.¹⁹

This is a particularly Egypto-Greek viewpoint, again direct from the traditions and teachings of Neoplatonism. And we know that Egyptian theology was well known in this era and in this region, not simply because Jesus was an Egypto-Judaic monarch in exile, but because in 10:17 of *Recognitions*, Clement gives a good overview of the Egyptian creation myth of Atum. Interestingly, he calls Atum, Phainetas, which is derived from *phano* φαίνω and *phantasia*

φαντασια meaning ‘sudden appearance of light’ (because Atum suddenly burst out of an egg). It is from this ‘unbelievable’ appearance at the beginning of the world (and probably from similar conjuring tricks) that we derive the English word ‘fantastic’. In the King James Bible an equivalent translation might be Lucifer or Phosphorus φωσφωρος (Helel הילל in the Hebrew), the fallen angel who was also the bringer of light, and identified with Venus.

That these were also the beliefs of the Galileans of Jesus and James is confirmed by the creed of the Nazarene. Jesus was most definitely a Nazarene, as Math 2:23 makes clear, and so the Nazarene and the Galileans must have been either the same or parallel sects. In addition the introduction to the *Clementine*

Recognitions, by Professor Riddle, says that the Nazarene were Ebionites meaning 'the poor', who he also describes as 'Jewish Christians' or 'Hebrew Christians'. In a later chapter, the beliefs of the Nazarene-Ebionite sect will be uncovered in some detail and it will be demonstrated that they were overtly Egyptian. In fact, this paragraph in *Recognitions* may have been reviewing Nazarene beliefs, rather than Egyptian religion.

But why does it matter that Simon Magus is supposed to have endorsed polytheism, for who was Simon Magus and why is he important? Simon Magus first appears in the gospels in Acts 8:9, and he is said to have been a magician and wonder-worker who was beguiling the people, especially those in the north of the country; and his opinions and actions

are entirely relevant to this investigation because in *Recognitions*, Simon Magus is said to have been the primary student of John the Baptist.

Simon (Magus) ... disciplined himself greatly in Alexandria, becoming very powerful in magic and ambition ... and sometimes declaring himself to be the christ (the anointed king). Of the thirty disciples of John (the Baptist), the first and most esteemed by John was Simon (Magus).

It was at Alexandria that Simon (Magus) perfected his studies, being an adherent of John (the Baptist) through whom he came to understand religious doctrines ... Of all John's disciples, Simon was his favourite.²⁰

John the Baptist (called here the Hemero-Baptist or Day-Baptist) is said to have had thirty disciples including Simon Magus' sister, Luna-Helena. So the disciples of Jesus mimicked the twelve months or twelve signs of the zodiac, while John's thirty

disciples represented the days in a Lunar month. (It is further claimed that since a woman is only half a man, this reduced John's 30 disciple-days down to 29.5 disciple-days, which is almost exactly one Lunar month.) In addition, the Church of Jesus had a sabbath every seven days, while John had a sabbath every eleven days. It is not certain if these sabbatical periods should be linked and intertwined, but if they are they become the prime numbers in the Pi (π) fractional. And if we also recall that the birth of Jesus was symbolically on the winter solstice while the birth of John was symbolically on the summer solstice, then it becomes apparent that even if these two sects were disparate rivals, they were nevertheless very closely linked and possibly interdependent. They were two branches upon a

common vine.

Upon the death of John, his sect was taken over by the disciple Dositheus, which is an apposite name meaning 'god's gift'. Simon was initially his second in command, but undermined Dositheus to such a degree that he took control of the sect and also took Luna-Helena as his companion and sister-wife. [21](#)

The school of John the Baptist was in Alexandria, where Simon Magus spent much of his education. According to *Homilies*, Clement of Rome also found himself in Alexandria, after his ship had been 'blown off course' there. So it is not surprising that both Simon and Clement were fully conversant with Egyptian theology - just as John the Baptist and Jesus must have been too (remember that Jesus was likewise sent to Egypt

for his education). But this is interesting as it may also give us an insight into the teachings of John the Baptist, for if Simon Magus really was a disciple of John, then it is likely that John was also a polytheist Neoplatonist Gnostic who did not believe in the divinity of the predicted messiah. This may also explain Simon Magus' opposition to Jesus, for if he were a disciple of John the Baptist he may well have been unimpressed with John's usurper and successor.

Remember that many of the Jews were indeed waiting for a messiah to come, but the precise nature of that messiah was open to debate. The word 'messiah' merely means the 'anointed one', exactly the same as the Greek term 'christ', and both of these terms refer to an anointed king of the Jews. But this expected anointed king, who

was destined to unite all Jews and rule the whole world, did not have to be divine to fulfil the prophesy, he may have simply been a secular leader – a king like David or Solomon. That is what ‘messiah’ and ‘christ’ mean – king.

King Saul and King David, for instance, were also said to be messiahs, anointed by god. However, readers of the English Old Testament may not be aware of this, because whenever the translators came across the word *mashiakh* מָשִׁיחַ meaning ‘the messiah’, in relation to these kings, they translated this as ‘anointed one’ (See 1Sam 10:1 or 2Sam 2:4). Thus, a cursory glance at the text will not make it obvious that both King Saul and King David were also messiahs of the Jewish people, and so it is not so obvious that the special titles which

were given to Jesus were not quite so unique nor as divine as the Catholic Church likes to make out. Furthermore, this messiah or christ did not even have to be Israelite or Jewish, for Isaiah 45:1 calls Cyrus the Great the messiah!

Divine or not, it was obvious to the members of the Galilean Sect that an easy route towards installing their leader (Jesus) as a king of the Jews, was to fulfil the prophecy of the predicted messiah. Actually, much of this prophecy was deliberately contrived, for Jesus and his brothers were simply indulging in a little *peshet*, and creating their own prophecies by desperately looking for relevant verses in the Tanakh (the Old Testament). A good example of this is the prophecy of the birth of the messiah, which says:

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. [B22](#)

Since Jesus was never actually called Immanuel ('god is with us') it is difficult to see how this verse could apply to him, but it is taken as a prophecy of his birth nonetheless. Likewise the Star Prophecy says:

I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. [B23](#)

Now while Jesus was indeed of the tribe of Jacob (and Judah), he was not really looking to smite Moab and Sheth. Jesus wanted to do a little smiting in Jerusalem and Rome, to become Emperor of the Empire, so again this prophecy does not really apply. Despite this and many other

inconsistencies in these prophecies from the books of Isaiah, Numbers and Micah, many people believed in these manufactured Nazarene prophecies; especially the Star Prophecy. Thus it was a useful social tool for elevating Jesus from the position of prince into becoming King Jesus of the Jews, and perhaps King Jesus of Egypt, Rome and Persia too.

The news of this expected king from the east even alarmed the emperors of Rome, as a messiah-king from the east might spark a revolution in the eastern provinces and destabilise the entire Empire. So the Star Prophecy was taken fairly seriously and was mentioned by both Suetonius and Tacitus. But they chose to mock the Jews for thinking this (Jewish) prophecy actually applied to them, when in reality 'it belonged to

Emperor Vespasian'. So the Star Prophecy *was* used to ignite a revolution in Judaea, but it was eventually Vespasian who rode that revolution and prophecy back to the throne of Rome in AD 69, not Jesus.

Messiah

While Jesus was called the messiah, Simon was called both the messiah and the magus; with the latter title being derived from the Greek *magus* μάγος which was a title of the Persian priests and kingmakers – the biblical ‘wise men’ who visited the birth of Jesus. Magus is also the root of the English word ‘magician’, and so strong is the association between these words that Simon is said to have been a magician who performed tricks, rather than a priest who performed miracles. In fact

Recognitions goes one stage further and calls him Satan Σαταν, the adversary of god or perhaps his dualist twin.²⁵ The venerable theologian Adam Clarke says of Simon Magus:

They say that he pretended to be the Father (god) who gave the law to Moses; that he came in ... the person of the Son (of God); that he ... was the messiah ... and the woman who accompanied him was called Helena. All that we know on this subject is, that he used magic by which he bewitched the people.²⁶

In other words, Simon Magus was the original Son of God and Messiah before Jesus came along; and the use of magic and trickery is decidedly biblical too, for it was also used by Jesus and we shall see more examples of this magic later. This brings us no closer to discovering who Simon Magus really was; but we do know he

must have been related to Jesus in some manner, for the links between these two charismatic characters are undeniable.

It was my contention in the book *Cleopatra to Christ* that Jesus was not only related to the Egyptian royal line, but also to the Persian (Parthian) line, through Queen Thea Muse Ourania. It was this eastern proportion of Jesus' royal blood that prompted the Magi, the Persian priesthood and kingmakers, to attend his birth. Thus Jesus himself may have become associated with the *magi* priests of Persia, both through birth and through his education. The reason that this may be important is that any close relation of Jesus would also have been of Persian royal blood and perhaps known as a *magus*, and so Simon Magus may have been closely related to Jesus.

We know that Simon Magus was said to be a *magus* sorcerer, a great magician who was able levitate himself in front of crowds and even to conjure up a small boy from thin air, and let him disperse again. Interestingly, the account of this novel trick reads:

(Simon Magus) separated the soul of a child from his own body by incantations ... and having drawn the likeness of the boy, he has set it up in the inner room where he sleeps, saying that he formed the boy out of air by divine arts, and having painted his likeness he gave him back to the air. (Clementine Homilies, 2: 26.)

Perhaps the clue to how this deception was achieved, is that the apparition of the boy was seen in an 'inner room'. So it is entirely possible that we can see in this description a very early usage of a *camera obscura*: a large-

scale version of the pinhole camera that can indeed throw a ghostly image of a boy (who is standing outside) upon the wall of an inner chamber.

It was because of scientific subterfuge like this that many later priests and theologians called Simon a false prophet, who undermined the true message of Jesus. Although it is interesting how theologians will mock and denigrate the claim of Simon Magus to be a god incarnate, born of a virgin birth, and capable of performing miracles; and then say exactly the same thing about Jesus as though it is an undeniable fact, carved in stone.

But, just like Jesus, this particular messiah was also decidedly human, and the companion and great love of Simon Magus on his travels was a 'prostitute' called either Helena²⁷ or Luna.²⁸ So here we have a

complete
equivalence
between Simon
Magus and the
biblical Jesus.
Simon was the Son
of God and
messiah, born of a
virgin birth and a
worker of
miracles; while
his partner was a
prostitute, just like
Mary Magdalene,
who was
identified with the
Moon, just like
Mary the Virgin.
Jesus and Mary
were by no means unique in this era,
and these similarities are so close that
there just has to be a family



*Fig 4.3 Mary
the Virgin
identified as
Selene-Luna,
the Moon,
surmounted by
the twelve
golden stars of
the European
Union.*

relationship here, perhaps with Simon and Helena being of the previous generation. As an aside, the term 'prostitute' actually refers to the prestigious title of 'God's Wife', a temple princess who, in Egyptian theology, was known as the Virgin.

So who was this princess-wife of Simon Magus? Unfortunately, Helena Ελληνα is not necessarily a name as it can mean the 'Greek woman', so all we really know is that Helena was Greek. In fact, Simon claimed that Helena had been given this title because she had descended from heaven as an incarnation of both Isis and Helen of Troy. The next clue to her identity is that Helena was also called Luna, which refers to the Moon. But this is also a familiar appellation, because in Christian iconography the Virgin Mary was similarly identified

with the Moon, or Luna.

However, since I have already identified Mary the Virgin with Julia Ourania (and will do so again later), and since Julia was herself half Ptolemaic Greek with a name meaning 'heaven', the name Helena-Luna would be a fitting and decidedly subtle hypocorism for Mary the Virgin. So here we have the beginnings of an identification for Simon Magus and Helena-Luna - for Jesus and Mary ape this couple in so many respects they must have been closely related.

Simon Magus also shares many similarities with Gamaliel, the venerable sage who defended the Galilean sect from charges of heresy. And Gamaliel was closely linked to Gamala and therefore to Jesus of Gamala, which would again suggest a link between Simon and the family of

Jesus. And there are also many comparisons that can be drawn between Queen Thea Muse Ourania and Queen Helena of Adiabene who were both from Parthia (Persia), and so there may be a link between these two monarchs as well (a link that was finally proven in the next book in this trilogy). But Simon Magus was also from Parthia (Persia), as has already been suggested, and so Simon may be linked to these monarchs too.

Further connections can be seen in the rumoured incestuous relationship that Simon was having with Helena-Luna,²⁹ because Queen Helena and King Monobazus and likewise Queen Thea Muse and King Phraataces were all indulging in incestuous marriages. They were all keeping it in the family, one might say. However, the *Clementine Recognitions* appears to

know all of this too, for it says of the Magi:

The Magi marry their mothers and daughters not only in Persia, but in every nation where they dwell they keep their incestuous customs.³²

This was primarily a reference to Simon Magus, but the reference here to a magus marrying his mother suits Phraataces and Queen Thea Muse Ourania much better, so perhaps the author of *Recognitions* knew of these family connections between Simon and the Parthian royalty. This does, therefore, give us another gentle hint that Queen Thea Muse, Queen Helena and Helena-Luna were all related in some manner, a subject that will be explored further in a later chapter.

But we have still not divined the position and relationship of Simon

Magus. His father was called Antonius and his mother Rachel, and he came from Gettones in Samaria. And with Simon having a family name like Antonius and a strong association with Egypt, one might suspect some kind of association with Marcus Antonius or Mark Antony, the former consul of the eastern provinces of Rome. Simon was also hailed as a great *magus* (a magician) and the *stans* (the standing one). The latter title is said to refer to Simon being incorruptible, but another reference says it means he is the christ - the one standing at the right hand of god. ³³

With all that has been said about Simon, the initial thought was that Simon and Helena were directly comparable with Joseph and Mary the Virgin, the parents of Jesus. But if this great debate at Caesarea was convened

in AD 66, as seems likely, then this would be far too late for Jesus' father to be still alive, as we shall see in the next book in this trilogy. But if the AD 60s era is too late for the parents, then perhaps Simon Magus was Jesus' brother called Simon. So could Simon Magus be a pseudonym for brother-Simon? Let us look closer at what we know about Simon, and see.

Simon Magus was a polytheist Neoplatonist who was certainly in opposition to Sauline Simple Judaism. But he also argued very strongly against the militancy of Jesus, as we have already seen. He further said to Peter:

If you are right in asking for peace from the audience, then your master (Jesus) was wrong in saying: 'I have not come to send peace on Earth, but a sword.' (Recognitions 2:26.)

Simon Magus also made many blistering attacks on the rambling arguments and explanations put forward by Simon Peter: the disciple who had been appointed as a leader of the Nazarene Church by Jesus himself. Would brother-Simon have been in such opposition to his own brother Jesus? Or with Peter, one of the chief disciples? One suspects not.

The only sensible conclusion we can come to is that Simon Magus was not only the favourite student of John the Baptist, at the University of the Magi in Alexandria, but he was directly related to John too. Thus Simon Magus, was from a different but parallel line of this influential Egypto-Judaeen royal family, a branch that had been figuratively and literally decapitated when John the Baptist was beheaded on the orders of Herod

Antipas. In which case, it is not so surprising that Simon Magus possessed so many similarities to the family of Jesus, but was nevertheless in opposition to him and to his aggressive political goals.

summary

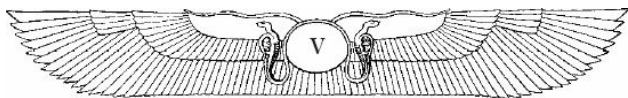
is likely that Clement, the third Bishop of Rome, was Titus Flavius Clemens, the nephew of Emperor Vespasian.

Simple Judaism (Christianity) must therefore have had favoured status within the imperial court of the Flavian emperors.

Simon Magus was a messiah and magician, a student of John the Baptist and a forerunner of Jesus himself.

is possible that Simon Magus and his partner Helena were the parents of

Jesus and Mary Magdalene.



Brother Barnabas

As Saul-Josephus set off on his great tours of the Mediterranean, he teamed up with a fellow evangelist named Barnabas. As with many of these characters, nobody really knows who this person was, and yet we know that he must have been an important person within the Galilean Sect. So who was Barnabas?

Firstly, perhaps it is worth pointing out that there are two very similar names here. There is Barsabas, a fleeting character who only appears

once in Acts, and Barnabas, the travelling companion of Saul (Josephus) on his missionary work around the Mediterranean. The verses that introduce these names are as follows:

And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas ... and Matthias.^{B1}

And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas.^{B2}

Since the historical identity of this new character is complete mystery, the venerable theologian Adam Clarke says of Barnabas:

Who he was, further than what is here said, we know not.³

But this is simply too dismissive and too convenient. In Chapter II, we have already seen that Barnabas was

probably the same as Josephus' tutor called Bannus. So here is the tutor of Saul-Josephus, the man who formed and moulded his belief systems, and yet again we know nothing about him. How convenient. However, we can get a little closer to his true identity if we can link the surnames Barnabas and Barsabas as being a single title, rather than two similar ones. The first clue to this proposed amalgamation comes from the different spellings in the different Bibles that we have. Again, the venerable theologian Adam Clarke says of the muddle in the previous verses:

Joses — Or, perhaps Joseph, as many excellent manuscripts read.

So in some Bibles Joses Barnabas is called Joseph Barnabas; and on many other occasions Adam Clarke has

already indicated that the name Joses is simply a short form of Joseph. But the muddle continues and there is also some confusion over the surnames themselves. Once again Adam Clarke says:




Some manuscripts read Joses Barnabas (instead of Joseph Barsabas, in Acts 1:23), making him the same with the Joses Barnabas in Acts 4:36.⁴

In other words, the name Joses is a shortening of Joseph, while Barnabas can be easily confused and equated with Barsabas. The root cause of this muddle is that Joseph Barsabas and Joses Barnabas were actually the same person, but different spellings of his name have crept into the various texts.

This same confusion has also happened in the historical record and the evidence for this comes from oasis

city of Palmyra, which lies on the borders of ancient Syria and Parthia. This city will eventually become central to this story, as I shall be arguing that the biblical family originated in this location. It was here, in the third century AD, that the legendary Queen Zenobia ruled her empire, and fomented a great revolt against Rome. But what was Zenobia's true name?

In actual fact, the version of her name that we are all familiar with, Zenobia, is a Greco-Latin name, while in the Arabic (and the original Aramaic) she was better known as Al-Zabbaa.⁵ Now this name is significant. Professor Eisenman links the name to *suba*, which in the Aramaic and Arabic can refer to bathing, which gives us a possible link to John the Baptist. This notion is strengthened when we realise

that John's father was called Abba Sabba Zacharias.⁶ However, as I have mentioned previously, Professor Eisenman is probably wrong in the meaning for *saba*, for while this word may have become linked to bathing at a later date, it was most probably derived from the Egyptian (and English^{*1}) word *saba*  meaning 'star'. All of the ancient religious cults were linked to stars, not baths or bathing; and so we find references to gods and goddesses called Astarte, Ashtoreth, Ishtar and Zoroastra, which are all derived from ester  or aster  meaning 'star' (and from where the English word 'star' was also derived). In addition, there was Lucifer (Phosphorus), Bar Kokhbar and Zethar, which are again all related to stars.

This same 'star' title was also

given to the Queen of Sheba (Queen of Saba), the legendary queen who paid homage to King Solomon and bore his child, and so the much later Queen Zenobia-Sabba of Palmyra was actually known as the Queen of Sheba. This was also the same title for the Sabaean nation of the Arabian peninsular, the nation whose early seventh century AD demise inadvertently (and unfortunately) created modern Islam. See the book *Solomon* for details. Thus Queen Zenobia-Sabba was following in the illustrious and revolutionary footsteps of leaders who followed the Star Prophecy; and I have already demonstrated that those footsteps were purely Egypto-Israelite, even for the Queen of Sheba from King Solomon's era.

However, for this chapter it is

not the culture or ancestry of this famous queen of Palmyra that is important, so much as the spelling of her name. In the original Aramaic (and Arabic), Queen Zenobia was known as Queen Sabba. It was only in the Greco-Latin translation that she became known as Zenobia. In my estimation, the names Bar-sabas and Bar-nabas have gone through exactly the same process – Bar-sabas was the original name, which referred to the stars and heavens above, while the name Barnabas is a Greco-Latin transliteration of this name. Thus the characters known as Barnabas and Barsabas were actually the same person. This would make sense of the Coptic version of the New Testament, which calls Barnabas, Barsabas;⁷ and also of the *Clementine Recognitions*, which similarly transposes the names

Barnabas and Barsabas.⁸

Having established this, it is also worth noting that in the Hebrew Bar-sabas **בַּר שָׁבַא** can be taken to mean the ‘Seventh Son’ and, as we all know, the seventh son of the seventh son is regarded as being someone quite special. While the number seven (7) may well be regarded as special in its own right, I think that the main reason for this name’s fame was that it referred to a star (*seba* or *sheba*).

In summary, the names Barsabas and Barnabas are identical, but for commonality with the majority of the references in Acts, the remainder of this chapter will use the ‘Barnabas’ version. So who was Barnabas? The method of finding Barnabas in the historical record rests on the association of two pairs of characters, from biblical history and from the

history of Josephus Flavius. The first pair to look at are the two contenders for the position of Jesus' disciple, one of the twelve; these were applicants who were eager to fill the place vacated by Judas Iscariot when he either died or was exiled to the east. The two contenders were:

And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas (Barnabas) ... and Matthias.[B9](#)

And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.[B12](#)

Here we have the mention of Joseph Barnabas and Matthias, and it is Matthias who was successful in this election and became the new disciple. We shall see later that this election may have actually been for the high priesthood, rather than the position of disciple, and so this election was

actually quite an important event.

There is no further mention of this Matthias within the Acts of the Apostles, which is quite strange considering that he had just become one of the twelve disciples. In fact, this is so strange that perhaps we should be looking for him within these texts under a different name. This is a perennial problem with the biblical texts, where characters have multiple appellations which are often simply the same name in a different language. But one version of this name may be used in one section of text, while another may be used elsewhere, and the result is utter confusion. In the case of Matthias, his alternative name can be glimpsed through a reference in the *Clementine Recognitions*:

After him Barnabas, who is also called Matthias, who was substituted as a disciple in

the place of Judas, began to exhort the people that they should not regard Jesus with hatred...¹³

Here we have the evidence that the Matthias just mentioned, the winner in the election for a new disciple, was also called Barnabas. But now we have two Barnabases as contenders in this election, Joseph Barnabas and Matthias Barnabas. In other words, there may well have been a family connection here, perhaps two brothers, and it may well be that Matthias Barnabas was the more reliable supporter of Jesus and James.

Here is the evidence that the new disciple who had just been elected, Matthias Barnabas, has not been deleted from the rest of Acts of the Apostles after all. In fact, he gets a starring role in Acts, but he is simply called Barnabas in this text instead of

Matthias. He also gets more than a few mentions in the *Clementine Recognitions*, where he is again called Barnabas, and here we are given an account of Matthias Barnabas' visit to Rome and his meeting with Clement (probably Titus Flavius Clemens, the nephew of Vespasian). The translator of the *Recognitions* cannot quite believe that Barnabas could be called Matthias, as this association brings with it a host of theological problems, so he adds, 'We should doubtless here read (Joseph) Barsabas'. Actually, rather than being a problem, the realisation that Barnabas was actually Matthias makes a good deal of sense, as we shall see.

So here we have two characters, who are named Joseph Barnabas Ιωσηφ Βαρσαβας and Matthias Barnabas Μαθθιας Βαρναβας , who

were both contenders in the election for a new disciple. To shed yet more light on this muddle, all we need to do is find this same pair in the historical record. Furthermore, we need to find an equivalent pair, with the same names, who were closely linked to the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James and who may have been trying to join with them (to be in the election for the new disciple).

The answer to this quest lies in the curious fact that the brother of Josephus Flavius was called Matthias. Here we have two brothers, Josephus and Matthias, who are central to this story and who definitely *were* in a position to be considered as applicants for the position of disciple. We know that Saul-Josephus wanted to join the Galilean Sect, after his flash of inspiration on the road to Damascus,

and so his application for discipleship would be natural. Again we see evidence that Saul was, in fact, Josephus, for the names and desires of these 'separate' individuals again meld and merge into one strand of history – but only if we understand that Saul was Josephus (Saul-Josephus).

This association would also make sense of the earlier travels of Saul-Josephus around the Mediterranean, which I believe took place *before* the exile of Judas Iscariot and therefore *before* a position as disciple became vacant and thus *before* Joseph(us) Barnabas and Matthias Barnabas made their applications to become a disciple.

Two of the characters who were most central to the story in Acts of the Apostles were Saul and Barnabas, who travelled across the

Mediterranean together on Saul's first evangelical tour. But if Saul was Josephus, as I maintain, and if his brother Matthias was Barnabas, as has just been demonstrated, then the two characters who went on this evangelical tour around the eastern Mediterranean were actually brothers – they were Saul-Joseph(us) Barnabas and Matthias Barnabas. Barnabas (Barsabas) was therefore a surname for the Josephian family, and we shall see more evidence for this later. In fact, his mother, father and another brother were all called Saba (meaning star).

Saul-Josephus Barnabas and Matthias Barnabas were the intrepid brothers who toured the Mediterranean as missionaries for the Galilean Sect (before Saul-Josephus started preaching Simple Judaism instead).

But it has already been demonstrated that Saul-Josephus was only a youngster on this first tour, he being an apprentice of only about sixteen years old; and so for this theory of the two brothers to work, then Matthias Barnabas must have been the older of the two brothers. This, however, is exactly what Acts says, for during their first grand tour of the Mediterranean, (Matthias) Barnabas and Saul-Josephus (Barnabas) found themselves in Lukaonia. But the people of Lukaonia were in a high-spirited mood and mocked them, mercilessly:

And they called (Matthias) Barnabas, Jupiter; and Saul (Barnabas), Mercurius.^{B14} (my brackets)

So the humorous Lukaonians named Matthias Barnabas after the king of the gods, Jupiter; while Saul-Josephus

Barnabas was just his fiery young messenger, Mercury. This mockery clearly demonstrates that Matthias Barnabas was the elder and more senior of the two brothers, and so Saul-Josephus Barnabas could easily have been a sixteen-year-old apprentice at this time, working under the wing of his older brother, Matthias.

From the fun that the Lukaonians were having, it would appear that Matthias Barnabas was not that much older than his brother, Saul-Josephus Barnabas, and so again we have this imagery of two young Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses knocking on the doors of hapless residents in far-flung countries. Yet this is what these organisations still do to this day: they send out wet-behind-the-ears youngsters, who have no experience of the real world, to try and convert hard-

bitten adults who know full well that spending several hours in a temple or church is not going to feed the wife and kids. Mind you, Islam succeeds in making its followers do just that, which is why the world of Islamia is generally so poor (excepting when it sits on a pool of black-gold).

The split

Having completed their first tour of the Mediterranean, these young evangelical adventurers had a bit of a disagreement. In fact, Saul-Josephus Barnabas appears to have engaged in a ferocious argument with Matthias Barnabas.

And (Matthias) Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Saul thought it was not good to take him with them ... And the contention was so

sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so (Matthias) Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus, and Saul (Josephus) chose Silas, and departed.^{B19} (my brackets)

So what was this argument all about? Why did Saul-Josephus Barnabas fall out with his brother, Matthias Barnabas? The answer to this lies in the reactions that the evangelical pair had received during their first tour of the Mediterranean. They had been stoned and pilloried by the Jews of the Empire, but a considerable number of Gentiles had shown an interest in their message of a messiah who will rise in the east to rule the world.

However, there were some major stumbling blocks to Gentiles joining the Galilean Sect, and idolatry, circumcision and dietary prohibitions were but a few of these. But Saul-Josephus was convinced that Gentile

membership would be good for the cause and especially good for the community coffers, and so he petitioned James-Justus (Jesus' brother) to help these rootless Gentiles. Saul-Josephus must have made a convincing case, for James finally wrote a letter to all the fledgling congregations that Saul-Josephus and Matthias had established around the Mediterranean. This letter to the Gentiles declared that:

For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you (the Gentiles) no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if you keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.^{B22} (my brackets)

While the Galilean Sect of Jesus-Justus and James-Justus was considered to be

radical by the Jerusalem priesthood, here was an entire revolution in a single paragraph – the entire book of Mosaic law reduced down to four rules! This was the fundamental edict that eventually led Saul-Josephus towards his new brand of Simple Judaism for the Gentiles, and it was being suggested and promoted by none other than James himself! It was James who inadvertently created Christianity, and one has to wonder why. Saul-Josephus was just seventeen at the time, so was this letter drafted simply to keep a persistent youngster quiet? Did James think that Saul-Josephus' ideas were idiotic and would never bear fruit, and so created these rules simply to humour the young buck? We simply do not know, but it is absolutely certain that he would never have contemplated writing this letter if he

had known its consequences, for this small acorn would eventually grow to enormous proportions and result in the defeat of the Galilean Church of Jesus and James.

It was surely this letter and this new zeal to preach to the Gentiles that caused the split between Saul-Josephus Barnabas and his brother Matthias Barnabas. Saul-Josephus was keen to get out and evangelise among the Gentiles, as we know he did on this second tour, while his brother was still wedded to the 'radical', but nevertheless still fairly orthodox, Judaism of the Galilean Sect.

Acts of the Apostles does not give the reasoning for this argument between these brothers, which caused them to part, and for a glimpse at the true reasoning we have to look at a non-canonical text known as the

Gospel of Barnabas, a document that was supposedly written by Matthias Barnabas; a text that has survived in the Islamic world.

The provenance of this particular text is hotly disputed, primarily because it relates that Jesus was simply a prophet and not a god, and yet this agrees with the koranic account of Jesus' life as well as the views of Simon Magus. So the Catholic hierarchy intimate that the Gospel of Barnabas is an Islamic forgery, while the Muslim world tries to promote it as being a genuine lost gospel from the first century AD. The denial of Jesus as a god simply comes from Arianism, a sect of Christianity that was expunged after the Council of Nicaea in the early fourth century AD, and so this has no bearing on the veracity of this document whatsoever.

In fact, the Gospel of Barnabas reads like a genuine gospel, with a few later Islamic interpolations bolted into the text, most of which simply say that Muhammad was to be the next prophet. It cannot be a later, forged text for Muslim propaganda, as some have suggested, as it does not follow the standard bellicose format of the Koran. The Koran will not let a page turn without some bloodthirsty curse or rant against Jews and Christians (and Sabeans, Pagans, Atheists and Idolators), whereas the Gospel of Barnabas is as complimentary about Judaism as are the four canonical gospels.

Interestingly, the Gospel of Barnabas introduces extra material into many of the well-known events in Jesus' life, such as the koranic view that Judas was crucified and not Jesus,

and that Jesus' dispute with the Jerusalem priesthood was over the introduction of a new Jewish republic. In other words, Jesus wanted an elected leadership (an elected priesthood), and this is a subject that the New Testament mentions in passing but studiously ignores. We shall see in a later chapter that Jesus did indeed become the first elected high priest, as the Epistle to the Hebrews clearly says. But this fact is somehow lost on the Christian priesthood, for not one sermon that I have heard has ever mentioned that Jesus was High Priest of Jerusalem.

Another point worth mentioning is that the Gospel of Barnabas is strongly anti-Saul (Josephus), which places it well outside the doctrinal limits of the canonical gospels that Saul was collating into his New

Testament. This is, one presumes, the primary reason for this gospel being rejected by the orthodox Church and so we should not be surprised that it was a secretive document that has only survived in the east.

However, what this gospel can do is clear up the reasons why Saul-Josephus Barnabas and his brother Matthias Barnabas had this great argument and went their separate ways. The Gospel of Barnabas has Matthias Barnabas saying of his brother Saul-Josephus Barnabas:

Many, being deceived of Satan, under presence of piety, are preaching most impious doctrine: calling Jesus son of God, repudiating the circumcision, and permitting every unclean meat: among whom also Saul has been deceived ...

Therefore beware of every one that preaches unto you new doctrine contrary to that which I write, that you may be saved eternally.²³

Acts of the Apostles does not give any reason for this argument between these brothers, but Galatians chapter 2 makes it clear that Saul-Josephus had been preaching that Jesus was a god, that he forbade circumcision, and he allowed unclean meats to be eaten; which are exactly the same complaints that Matthias Barnabas is making about Saul-Josephus Barnabas in this verse. So it is only through a combination of Galatians and the Gospel of Barnabas that we can deduce the true reason for this sibling dispute, this pivotal moment that forced Saul-Josephus to go off on his own and preach the gospel of Simple Judaism. Thus, rather than being an Islamic invention, the Gospel of Barnabas is actually a valuable tool in this research.

In summary, it would seem likely that my original supposition was

correct. Having been given a dispensation to evangelise among the Gentiles with a greatly pared-down form of Judaism, Saul-Josephus was already making enemies, even among his own family. Part of the reason for this is that he had already begun not only to teach Simple Judaism to the Gentiles, but to actively teach against orthodox Judaism to the Jews. As we shall see, having a body of foot-soldiers who were not really Jewish, in that they were not circumcised and not eating *kosher* foods, was highly problematical and divisive for a Jewish sect; which is why St Peter was getting into so much trouble whenever he met Saul-Josephus and ate dinner with Simple Judaic Gentiles, as we saw in the previous chapter.

In addition, it does now seem likely that my other proposal was also

correct. Barnabas (Barsabas) was a surname that was appended to all of Saul-Josephus' family members, and the individual who travelled widely with Saul-Josephus on his first missionary tour around the Mediterranean was actually Matthias Barnabas, Saul-Josephus' elder brother.

Saul-Josephus was very much the junior in this partnership, as we have seen. The first missionary travels by Saul-Josephus occurred in AD 53, and since Saul-Josephus was born in AD 37 it would appear that he was an apprentice of only sixteen years of age at this time. The argument between Matthias and his brother occurred at the beginning of the second missionary tour, when Saul-Josephus had found his theological feet and was beginning to assert his own views. So even at the

age of seventeen, Saul-Josephus had discovered that it was much more profitable to convert Gentiles than Jews, and was already taking his first steps towards setting up his own, rival Church of Simple Judaism (Christianity).

summary

arsabas and Barnabas are the same name. Barsabas refers to stars, and the entire family of Saul-Josephus will be shown to have this same surname.

arnabas, the fellow traveller of Saul-Josephus on his missionary tours, was actually Matthias Barnabas (Matthias Barsabas), Saul-Josephus' elder brother.

efore their second tour the two brothers argued and parted over preaching Simple Judaism to Gentiles. This was the pivotal moment when Saul-Josephus created his new creed of

Simple Judaism (Christianity).

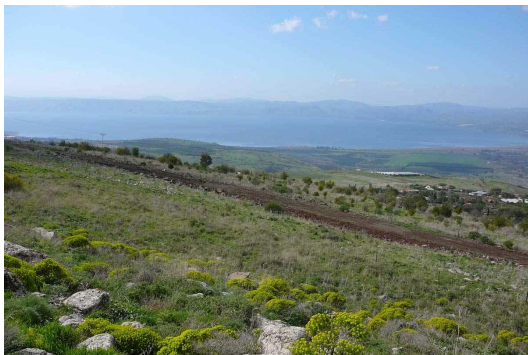


Plate 1. The Sea of Galilee, from the east-bank, looking across to Tiberias.



Plate 2. Qumran, looking out over the Dead Sea. The scroll caves are in the side of the

second ridge, while the settlement is on top of the far ridge.



Plate 3. The Roman army advancing in a *testudo* or turtle formation.



Plate 4. The Jesus Scroll – a fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

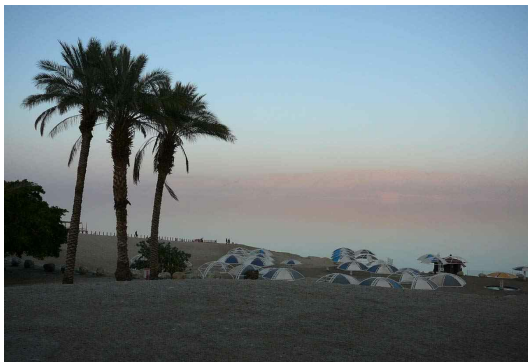


Plate 5. A beach resort on the Dead Sea, looking across to the hills on the Jordanian side of the lake. It was here that King Jesus performed the trick of ‘walking on the water’.



Plate 6. Masada, on the Dead Sea. The Jewish War started at this desert fortress, with the theft of its armoury, and ended here with the mass suicide of its defenders.



Plate 7. The Hamat Teverya zodiac near Tiberias, with conventional astrological signs and the Greek Sun-god Helios (or the

Palmyran Yahibol) in the center. Note that the head of Helios lies directly between Aries (sheep) and Pisces (fish), in exactly the same position as the precessional position of the Sun in the early part of the first century AD.

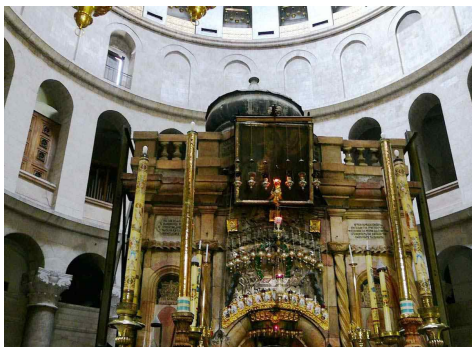


Plate 8. The interior of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The ugly carbuncle in the center of the rotunda is supposed to enclose the tomb of Jesus. However, for many reasons this location cannot be the site of Jesus' burial.



Plate 9. The formidable fortress of Herodium near Tekoa. This vast hill is said to be man-made, but it is actually a natural mesa with a fortress on its summit.

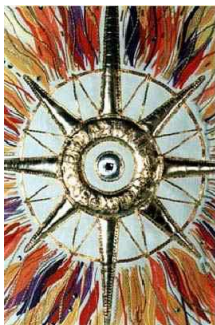


Plate 10. The Evil Eye from the robes of the Archbishop of Canterbury (top). An Evil Eye

charm (bottom). A lucky talisman that King Jesus banned.



Plate 12. The Dome of the Rock on the site of the Temple of Jerusalem. It was built around the Foundation Stone, considered to be the navel of the Universe, a stone that may be equated in some respects with the Egyptian Benben.



Plate 13. The Pudens Basilica in Rome, said to have been built over the mansion of Pudens and Claudia, the parents of Linus, the second Bishop of Rome. The original mansion was apparently used as a church.



Plate 14. A medieval image of Jesus inside

the Vesica Piscis. It signifies the birth of Jesus in the Age of Pisces.



Plate 15. Jerusalem old city; looking across the Kidron Valley from the cemetery that is the Mount of Olives. The Dome of the Rock is in the center, and the Antonia Fortress would have been to the right of this. The Tomb of Zechariah is out of sight below the ridge in the foreground.



Plate 16. Model of first century Jerusalem. The castle in the center is the Antonia Fortress and the structure on the far left is the Temple of Jerusalem (now the Dome of the Rock). The Lion Gate, through which Saul-Josephus came with his cavalry detachment after his trip to Tekoa, is just out of view on the left.



Plate 17. This is the Kidron Valley, below the great cemetery on the Mount of Olives, looking in the opposite direction to plate 15. The pyramid-tomb is the supposed Tomb of Zecharia, but its Romanesque design points towards a much later date. The open rock-tomb on the left is likely to be where Jesus was taken after the crucifixion.



Plate 18. A very similar Judaic pyramid tomb in the deserted city of Al-Bara, south of Aleppo, Syria. The tomb is certainly Judaic, as all the sarcophagi inside are modelled on the Israelite horned altar. The purpose of the roof decoration is uncertain, but the local bird population were very appreciative of these roosting lugs.

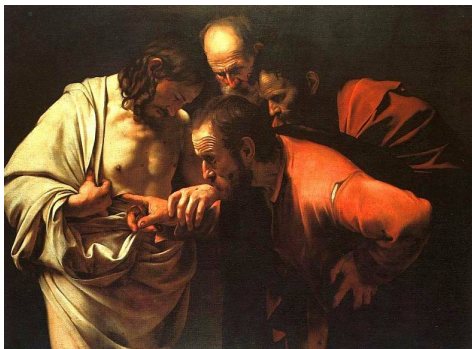


Plate 19. The rather gruesome painting of the disciple Thomas not believing that Jesus had been crucified. Michelangelo Caravaggio.

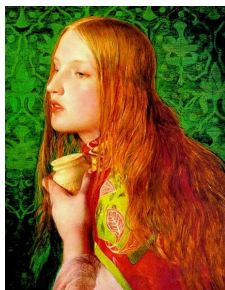
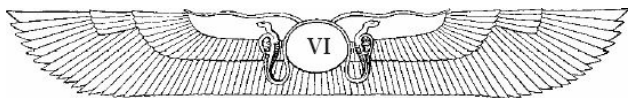


Plate 20. Mary Magdalene, by Anthony Sandys. Mary can always be identified in artwork by her ginger hair, the alabaster jar of anointing oil and her green and orange cloak (in this case, green and red).



Plate 21. Mary the Virgin portrayed as Muse Ourania, standing on the Moon with the twelve stars of the European Union over her head. Mary is always portrayed in blue and white: the Sapphire lady (Mary Sapphias).

*1 The Concise Oxford Dictionary gives Sabaeism as being ‘star-worship’.



High Priest Jesus

In reviewing the literary and epigraphic evidence before us, one has to imagine the middle-aged Saul-Josephus (St Paul) sitting in his comfortable apartments in either Rome or Jabneh near Tel Aviv – both of which were granted to him by his patron emperors, Vespasian and Titus – and contemplating the vast task that lay ahead. He has before him not only a great sheaf of his own notes about the Jewish uprising and civil war, but also the holy books from the Temple of

Jerusalem. Saul-Josephus himself says that he obtained this most ancient of scrolls:

Moreover, when the city Jerusalem was taken by force, Titus Caesar persuaded me frequently to take whatsoever I would of the ruins of my country; and he gave me leave so to do ... so I made this request to Titus, that my family might have their liberty. I also had the holy books (from the Temple) by Titus's concession.^{J1}

Josephus' grand intention was to write an entire history of the Jewish people, from Adam all the way through to Josephus himself. To do this alone would have been impossible, but we know that both Saul and Josephus (Saul-Josephus) had a great deal of assistance in his momentous task, for he gives credit in each of his books to one Epaphroditus, who was effectively his 'publisher'. This equivalence again

demonstrates, if further evidence were needed, that Saul was indeed Josephus:

Josephus dedication:

But to thee, O Epaphroditus, thou most excellent of men! do I dedicate all this treatise of our *Antiquities*; and so, for the present, I here conclude the whole.[J2](#)

Saul dedication:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. To the Philippians written from Rome, by Epaphroditus.[B3](#)

It is likely that Josephus' Epaphroditus was actually Epaphroditus of Chaeronea, a slave in the house of Archias, a Greek *grammaticus* or scholar. However, we know that Saul spent at least six months in Achaia (Greece) and that he met and knew the governor, for it was Gallio who acquitted Saul of the charges of blasphemy brought against him. We

also know that Saul's Epaphroditus came from Philippi, which is located on the northern coastline of Achaia. Thus, these 'two' persons called Epaphroditus come from substantially the same region, and may well be a single person – Saul-Josephus' literary colleague.

The historical Epaphroditus from Greece was finally freed from his slavery by the prefect of Egypt and he travelled to Rome where he effectively set up a school, library and publishing house. It is the latter experience that Josephus would have needed if he were to ever realise his great literary ambitions, for publishing a book in this era was highly labour-intensive. One imagines that Epaphroditus himself would have relished the income that a patron emperor could bring to his fledgling business, and readily agreed.

However, as we shall see later, he and Josephus did not simply set up a publishing house, but a complete Hebrew university and Judaic parliament too!

In addition to all this, it is likely that this same Epaphroditus became known as Tiberius Claudius Epaphroditus, a courtier and scribe to Emperor Nero. So how did the ex-slave, Epaphroditus, become chief scribe to Emperor Nero? One possibility is through the industrious designs of Saul-Josephus himself. During his visit to Rome in AD 63, Saul-Josephus claims that he had formed a friendship with Aliturus, an actor friend of Nero, and it was through him (or through Berenice, the sister-wife of King Agrippa II) that he was introduced to Poppaea, Nero's wife.^{J4}

Poppaea, as we will see, took a shine to the young (Saul) Josephus, and showered him with presents, and so it is entirely possible that he had a degree of influence over Poppaea and thus over the imperial court in general. Therefore, it may have been through the long-term scheming of Saul-Josephus that Epaphroditus gained his position in the court of Nero; with the intention here being to place a follower of Simple Judaism (Christianity) at the heart of the Roman Empire. Significantly, it may even have been through Epaphroditus that Nero met his end and Vespasian gained the Imperial purple of Rome, for it just so happens that the court scribe called Epaphroditus killed Emperor Nero:

By this time the horsemen were close at hand, and so Nero killed himself, uttering that far-famed sentence: 'Jupiter, what an artist

perishes in me!’ And as he lingered in his agony Epaphroditus dealt him a finishing stroke.⁵

Was this the same Epaphroditus who was Saul-Josephus’ publisher, as I have just suggested? Some may shrug their shoulders and say that Epaphroditus is not an unusual name for a Greek. However, it is a fact that ‘both’ of these characters were competent scribes, and so Saul-Josephus’ Epaphroditus was just the sort of man that Nero needed. In addition, it is worth noting that according to Suetonius, the two prominent people who Domitian executed in AD 95 were this same Epaphroditus, the secretary of Nero, and Titus Flavius Clemens, the character that I and others have equated with Clement of Rome, the third Simple Judaic (Christian) pope.

In fact, these two executions are mentioned in conjunction with one another within the same paragraph.⁶

It would seem obvious that these executions were linked in some manner, and the common thread here is either Simple Judaism or Saul-Josephus, or both. But if Nero's Epaphroditus was linked to Clement of Rome and to Simple Judaism, then surely he must also have been Saul-Josephus' Epaphroditus — his publisher.

It is worth noting that Saul-Josephus also disappears off the historical radar at about the same time that Epaphroditus met his end. Saul-Josephus finished his *Antiquities of the Jews*, his personal and monumental version of the Old Testament, in AD 93, while *Life* and *Against Apion* were completed in AD 94 or 95, but then we

hear no more of him.*¹ All we know is that he outlived Agrippa II, but since we don't know when Agrippa died, this is of little assistance. Was *Against Apion*, which staunchly supports Judaism and condemns Greek theology, a step too far for Emperor Domitian? Was Saul-Josephus' newly proposed book, on the nature of Jewish doctrine and the nature of god, even more volatile? It is not difficult for authors and artists to fall foul of despotic leaders, so was the politico-theology of Saul-Josephus becoming a liability to the Flavians? Was Saul-Josephus getting too big for his boots?

There is a distinct possibility, therefore, that Nero's scribe called Epaphroditus was actually a Simple Judaist, and the 'publisher' of both Saul and Josephus (Saul-Josephus). But this identification would place an

interesting and highly entertaining twist upon these historical events. It would mean that Nero, the emperor who had supposedly persecuted the Church of Simple Judaism (or at least persecuted Saul-Josephus personally) had been killed by a Simple Judaist who was also Saul-Josephus' publisher and most trusted friend and confidante. *Touché!*

Publication

It was under the direction and guidance of Saul-Josephus and this Epaphroditus that the great translation and copying of the Judaic Tanakh (the Old Testament) began. And for the first time in its history, the Tanakh was being translated by non-Jews working in the Greek language. These were scribes who may not have had any particular knowledge of the texts they were

copying and no particular theological agenda to promote, and not surprisingly the end result is a Tanakh that is significantly different to the present biblical version, which only dates from the eleventh century AD.

Remember that Saul-Josephus had the oldest and most authoritative text to work from, the very Tanakh (Torah) scroll from the Temple of Jerusalem after it fell to the Romans, and he had a work-force that had no particular interest in changing any texts. Saul-Josephus, as overseer of the work, had every interest in changing some of these texts, but those of the Old Testament had no particular relevance to himself or his present situation, which is why I consider Josephus Flavius' *Antiquities of the Jews* to be more authoritative than the Old Testament itself. In fact, the

English translator of Josephus, William Whiston, writes a great dissertation on why we should believe that Josephus' *Antiquities* is a direct copy of the scrolls written by Nehemiah in the days of Artaxerxes, son of Xerxes (c. 465-424 BC) and that it is therefore free of the many alterations that have been made to the text since that time.⁷

However, Josephus' more personal accounts, called *The Jewish War* and *Life*, were a rather different matter. Here were two accounts of the activities of Saul-Josephus himself, as commander of Galilee in the years before and during the great Jewish Revolt. *Life* is a vainglorious autobiography of Saul-Josephus that appears to have been padded or duplicated for added effect. Steve Mason, who wrote a biography of Josephus Flavius, claims that this

duplication is a literary 'sandwich technique' designed to heighten the drama. Less idealistically, to me it appears to be a simple method of doubling the 'great' achievements of the 'indefatigable' Saul-Josephus, the 'hero' army commander of Galilee.

Within the accounts of *Life* and *The Jewish War* Saul-Josephus had to tread more carefully, as he had actually been fighting against the Romans prior to his great 'flash of inspiration' (on the road to Damascus). Anything anti-Roman in these accounts might result in an unwelcome but intimate association with a wooden cross and some nails; and while Saul-Josephus' hero-figure in his religious texts had tried this form of protest, Josephus was made of less idealistic stuff. We can be sure, therefore, that *Jewish War* and *Life* were suitably amended to ensure that

Saul-Josephus was portrayed as the hero of the Jewish War, so that he did not get into too much trouble with Vespasian.

Flavius Sabinus

There was also the thorny problem of the New Testament to write, and surprisingly enough we see the same kind of recommendation or tribute being given in these texts too. The Acts of the Apostles is simply the sequel to the Gospel of Luke, with both seemingly penned by the same hand. The Gospel of Luke deals with the era from the birth of Jesus up to the orthodox date for his crucifixion, while Acts relates the events subsequent to this, right up to the outbreak of the Jewish Civil War. Josephus' *Jewish War* takes over from there, and so there

is an unbroken history of Judaeo-Israel for the whole of the first century AD that may well have had a single author.

Both the Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles are dedicated to one Theophilus, in much the same way that Saul-Josephus' books and letters are dedicated to Epaphroditus.^{B8} Both of these names follow a similar Greek format of a dedication to a god, with Theophilus Θεοφίλος meaning 'friend of god' and Epaphroditus Επαφροδιτος meaning 'dedicated to Aphrodite'.

Gospel of Luke:

It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus.^{B9}

Acts of Apostles:

The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach.^{B12}

The true identity of Theophilus is unknown, but it is certain that he was influential, as the author of Luke calls him *kratistos* κρατιστος, which is an honorific pronoun meaning ‘most excellent’ or ‘noble’, a term that was usually reserved for powerful and aristocratic men. The second reference hails him as ‘O Theophilus’, another reverential term. So who was this powerful and influential individual?

One interesting possibility that has been mooted is that Theophilus was actually Titus Flavius Sabinus, a prefect of Alexandria. This again means very little to us if we do not know who this person was, and how he ties into the theo-politics of Judaea. However, the most famous prefect called Titus Flavius Sabinus was actually the elder brother of Emperor Vespasian and father of Titus Flavius

Clemens, the Bishop of Rome who has already been discussed in Chapter IV.

Without the background material already covered in this book it would seem absurd that the author of Luke and Acts would have been writing to the elder brother of Emperor Vespasian. Just why would an emperor's brother be interested in Simple Judaism? And how could someone openly advertise their attachment to this new creed without arrest and an unfortunate ending?

However, the new knowledge we have recently acquired paints a rather different picture. Firstly, we already have a biblical author who was very close to and was patronised by the Flavian emperors, and he was Saul-Josephus. In my previous works I have only suggested that Saul-Josephus edited the synoptic gospels, to ensure

that they agreed with his new form of Simple Judaism. Here, however, we have the direct possibility that Saul-Josephus actually wrote the entire Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, with the other synoptic gospels being later copies of his work. (The Gospel of John, being overtly Gnostic, is obviously from another author and an alternative perspective.)

In addition, we also have the intriguing possibility that the Flavian emperors were interested in Simple Judaism. Previously I had suggested that Saul-Josephus kept his evangelism of Simple Judaism a secret, and only admitted to writing his secular works to the Flavian emperors. But that would have been rather difficult, given the network of spies available to the emperor. Alternatively, it is entirely possible that a simplified form of

Judaism designed for use by Gentile Romans (Simple Judaism) was rather beneficial to the Empire, as it limited the expansion of the more divisive Orthodox Judaic creed.

That some of the Flavians may have been converts to Simple Judaism is implicit in the evidence we have already explored in Chapter IV, which demonstrated that both Titus Flavius Clemens and his wife Flavia Domitilla were executed or exiled for being adherents of Simple Judaism. Indeed, Flavius Clemens is likely to have been Clement of Rome, the third pope of Simple Judaism, and Titus Flavius Sabinus was actually his father. That a gospel from the New Testament was dedicated to Titus Flavius Sabinus, the father of a pope, would not be so unusual.

High Priest Jesus

The position of the high priesthood of Jerusalem was traditionally hereditary. It had been inherited from among the Jewish families who could trace their lineage back to the tribe of Levi, through Aaron (the brother of Moses) and this was a tradition that went back some thirteen hundred years. But at this very moment in time, that ancient tradition was about to be broken. In the mid AD 60s the Zealots had entered the city of Jerusalem with John of Gishala, and caused chaos by assassinating the eminent men of the city and Temple. However, Simon Zelotes, one of Jesus' disciples (and perhaps his brother), was also a Zealot, and so the Zealots who were trying to take charge of Jerusalem probably included the biblical disciples and the rest of the

Galilean Sect.

Then, ‘as a cunning contrivance to seize the government’, as Josephus puts it, the Zealots decided to cast lots to choose the next high priest of Jerusalem, instead of choosing one from the tribe of Levi.

Now the people had come to a degree of meanness and fear, and these robbers to a degree of madness, that they took upon them to appoint (elect) high priests. So when they had disannulled the succession, according to those families out of which the high priests used to be made (the Levites), they ordained certain unknown and ignoble persons for that office.^{J13} (my brackets)

William Whiston, the venerable translator of Josephus, insists that this unconstitutional arrangement, of an elected high priest, actually goes back to AD 63, rather than starting with the Zealot takeover of Jerusalem in AD 67.

Whiston says that there were four of these unconstitutional elected high priests and he is quite indignant about this break in the ancient hereditary priesthood, and bitterly complains:

Here we may discover the utter disgrace and ruin of the high priesthood ... when undeserving, ignoble, and vile persons were advanced to that holy office by the seditious ... The names of these high priests, or rather ridiculous and profane persons, were Jesus the son of Damneus, Jesus the son of Gamaliel, Matthias the son of Theophilus, and that prodigious ignoramus Phannias, the son of Samuel.^{J14}

Whiston's anger seems unjustified here, for while these high priests may well have been elected rather than hereditary, they were most certainly not all country yokels, as Josephus claims. Gamaliel, for instance, was the esteemed lawyer and member of the Sanhedrin who pleaded for leniency

for Peter and the other disciples in Acts 5:34 and *Recognitions* 1:65, who we have already met in a previous chapter as possibly being the father of Jesus. This pleading is very similar to the equivalent pleading by Nicodemus, in the Gospel of Nicodemus 5:1, and we shall see why this should be so later.

Then, in the very next paragraph of *Antiquities*, Josephus Flavius calls this same Jesus son of Gamaliel by a slightly different name – Jesus son of Gamala, the biblical Jesus – and so one of these newly elected high priests of Jerusalem was our favourite enemy of Saul-Josephus. Therefore, this comment by William Whiston suggests that the biblical Jesus (Jesus of Gamala or Gamaliel) became the high priest of Jerusalem in AD 63-64, at the age of 60. If only the venerable

Whiston had known that he was condemning his beloved biblical Jesus as being a 'ridiculous and profane person'! An own-goal, I feel.

Now one might assume that this suggestion, that Jesus was a high priest of Jerusalem, is a somewhat wild conjecture of mine, born of a fertile but deranged mind and without any confirmation whatsoever. But you would be wrong, for the New Testament says just this – that Jesus became High Priest of Jerusalem! Although again this is not something that readers will be lectured about in a Sunday school lesson.

The evidence for this is to be found in Saul-Josephus' letter to the Hebrews. Here, Saul makes an impassioned plea on behalf of the biblical Jesus, claiming that he did indeed have the right to be elected to

the office of high priest, even if he was not of the Tribe of Levi: [B15](#)

And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to take taxes from the people ... But this man (Melchizedek) who has not their genealogy (also) received tithes from Abraham (a) ...

This becomes even more evident when another priest arises (like Melchizedek), who has become a priest, not according to hereditary descent but by the power of an indestructible life. For he swears, 'Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.' (b)

When there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. (c) For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our lord (Jesus) was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. (d)

Those who formerly became priests took their office without an oath, but this one (Jesus) was addressed with an oath (e), 'The Lord

has sworn and will not change his mind, Thou art a priest for ever.' This makes Jesus the surety of a better covenant. (f)

These paragraphs represent yet another piece of Saul-Josephus' typically convoluted reasoning, and so perhaps they require a little explanation. (The following comments are annotated in the relevant section of the previous text.)

- a. The sons of Levi (and thus the sons of Aaron) were the traditional hereditary priesthood, and they took the Temple taxes. But the example is given of Melchizedek, who lived before Levi, who also received taxes without being a Levite (because Levi had not

yet even been conceived). Note that we are back on the subject of taxes again, which was the whole point of this Jewish War.

b. These priests of Melchizedek took an oath of office rather than accepting a hereditary post (or a 'carnal commandment', as the King James Bible translates this). Therefore, taking an oath must be better than receiving it through hereditary inheritance.

c. Therefore the law should be changed to reflect this.

- d. Jesus was not of the tribe of Levi.
- e. Thus any priest (like Jesus) who takes an oath is more suited to the office of high priest than someone of the hereditary line of Levi.
- f. Thus Jesus must be a better High Priest of Jerusalem than the traditional Levites. But remember that this position also allows Jesus to take all Judaeen taxes, which was the whole point of the exercise.

This, therefore, is exactly the same

event that Josephus Flavius was complaining about (and William Whiston was fulminating against, for that matter): the high priesthood had become an elected position, against all the conventions of Judaism. Likewise, in the biblical record, Saul would not have needed to make this long and convoluted explanation to his followers if Jesus had not indeed become an elected high priest of Jerusalem. And that is exactly what these verses from the Epistle to the Hebrews say – that Jesus became high priest. Therefore Jesus-Justus was not only King Jesus (Christ Jesus) he was also High Priest Jesus of the Temple of Jerusalem. Q.E.D.

This is why the Dead Sea Scrolls contain the fragment entitled ‘The Coming of Melchizedek’ (11Q13), a short text that details the

triumph of a messianic figure called Melchizedek who is the head of the Sons of Justice and who will be victorious over the Sons of Darkness. Their deliverer will be Melchizedek, who Geza Vermes equates with the Melchizedek in Hebrews, or the very same person who we have just discussed. However, it appears to have slipped Vermes' notice that the Melchizedek in Hebrews is actually a covert reference to High Priest Jesus, thus this fragment strongly links the Qumran community with Jesus and the events detailed in the gospels.¹⁶

Even more significant, perhaps, is the fact that we know that all of this happened in AD 63-64 and so once more we find that Jesus was alive and well in this later era. Likewise, the Dead Sea Scrolls were again being written in this later period.

That Jesus became high priest of Jerusalem appears to be confirmed in the *Suidas*, a tenth century Byzantine encyclopaedia, which records that Josephus said that Jesus officiated in the sanctuary of the Temple with the other priests, and must therefore have been a high priest.¹⁷ This will be confirmed by the Talmud, which again records that Jesus of Gamala changed the law in order to become high priest of Jerusalem, but more of this later.

Furthermore, these amazingly fertile paragraphs can give us yet another convenient convergence of names, for in Acts of the Apostles there was a strangely similar election to the one just mentioned by Josephus. However, this election was supposedly for a new disciple:

And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias (Barnabas); and he was

The two contenders for this election in Acts were Joseph Barnabas and Matthias Barnabas, who I have already identified as being Saul-Josephus and his brother Matthias; and it was Matthias who emerged as the eventual winner of this popularity contest. However, at the same time that this was happening, there was another election being held in the Temple of Jerusalem. The contenders in this election are unknown but the winner, the elected high priest of Jerusalem, was actually Matthias ben Theophilus – Matthias the son of Theophilus. Matthias was high priest from AD 65 to about AD 67, when he was succeeded by a much-derided character called Phannias (Phosphorus or Lucifer); the high priest that William Whiston called

a 'prodigious ignoramus'.

Strange as it may seem, it is entirely possible that these two elections were one and the same, and so Acts was recording an election to the office of high priest, rather than to the discipleship of Jesus. (They may have cast lots each year for a new high priest, just as Freemasons cast lots each year for a new Worshipful Master.) Remember that it was the rebel Zealots in Jerusalem who were organising these elections, and voting for an elected high priesthood. But the disciples were members of this very same Zealot faction, which is why Simon Zelotes was given his title. It does seem likely that Matthias Barnabas (Matthias Barsabas) was being elected as the next high priest of Jerusalem.

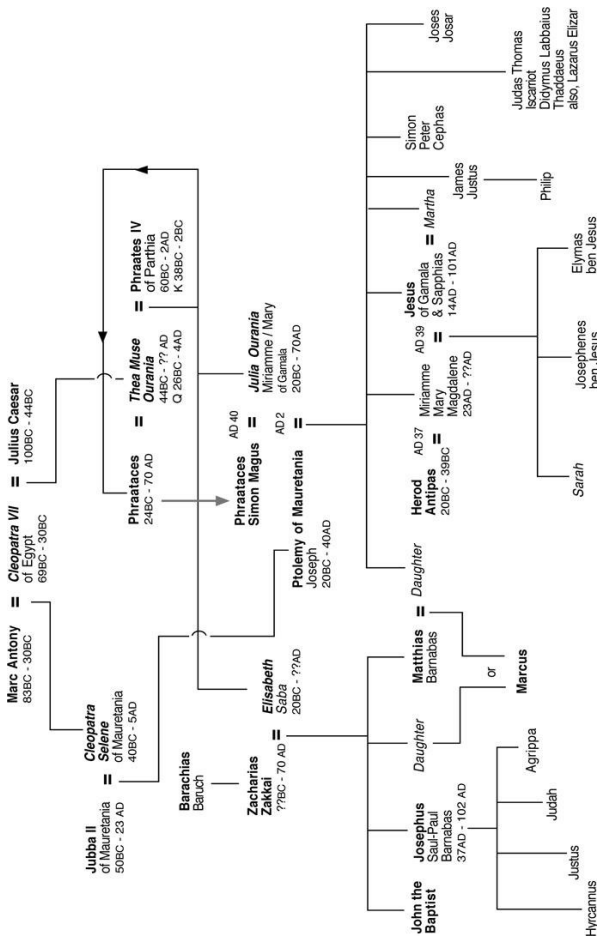


Fig 6.1 A simplified biblical genealogy.

The actions of Saul-Josephus appear to confirm this, for he had just returned to Jerusalem from Rome in AD 65-66, which is precisely when this new election for the high priesthood of Jerusalem was being held. From the biblical account of this election, the two contenders appear to have been Saul-Josephus Barnabas and Matthias Barnabas, but Saul-Josephus lost and his brother Matthias became high priest.

Having lost, Saul-Josephus had to settle for the position of army commander for Galilee, a post that he pursued with no great enthusiasm. The high priesthood came up for election again in AD 67, and again Saul-Josephus must have been passed over, because Phannias became high priest instead, a character who Saul-Josephus mocked mercilessly. Saul-Josephus

then surrendered to the Romans at the battle of Jotapata in that very same year. Was Saul-Josephus' disenchantment at his failure to get elected to the high priesthood a part of the reason for his transformation into a Roman quisling? Is this the reason for Josephus singling out Phannias (the high priest elected after Matthias) as being a rustic and a clown 'who did not even know what the high priesthood was'? Was Josephus expecting to attain the position that the 'rustic' Phannias eventually gained?

It may well be that a highly disgruntled Saul-Josephus took his revenge on the new (Galilean) Jerusalem priesthood, and the cabal of biblical disciples who ran those elections, by changing sides both religiously and politically. Saul-Josephus already had the fledgling

creed of Simple Judaism under his wing, which could easily be expanded into an independent religion, and if the disciples would not elect him to the high priesthood then perhaps Vespasian or Titus would. Thus Saul-Josephus sued for peace with Rome, and reignited his crusade against the Galileans (who now controlled the Jerusalem priesthood) by using Roman assistance and military power to attack Jerusalem itself.

Author of Acts

Earlier, we discussed the authorship of the gospels, and while it may seem like a great leap of faith to boldly assert that Saul-Josephus wrote both the Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles, there do appear to be many similarities between these various

works. Needless to say this has been noticed many decades ago and Max Krenkel and H Schreckenberg wrote *Josephus and Lukas* and *Flavius Josephus und die Lukanschen Schriften* to explain many of these similarities. These similar events, that both Luke and Josephus record in their works, are expertly summarised in this list by Richard Carrier:

The census under Quirinius.¹⁹

The same three rebel leaders: Judas of Gamala, Theudas, and 'The Egyptian'.²²

The death of Agrippa I as god's vengeance for accepting praise as a god.²³

The association of Agrippa II with Berenice.²⁴

The association of Felix with Drusilla.²⁵

Felix sending priests, or 'excellent men', to Rome for trial on petty charges.²⁶

Mention of Lysanias, tetrarch of Abilene.²⁷

Similarities in the description of the siege of Jerusalem.²⁸

Mention of a famine in the reign of Claudius.²⁹

Professor Steve Mason, in his deep analysis of Josephus' works, also notes many of these similarities and concludes that, in addition to generic parallels of genre and form and the use of the same historical events:

... the coincidence ... of aim, themes, and vocabulary ... seems to suggest that Luke-Acts is building its case on the foundation of Josephus' defense of (Simple) Judaism.³² (my brackets)

In addition, some of the subtext to Luke and Acts can only be understood if the reader is fully conversant with the works of Josephus. For example, during his many trials, Saul was brought before King Agrippa II and his sister Berenice. Saul-Josephus addresses the king by saying:

I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused

of the Jews. Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.^{B33}

Now this may sound like a standard, formal address to the king, but in actual fact Saul is making a deeply wounding joke at the king's expense. Josephus, in his secular works, reports that King Agrippa was having an affair with his sister, Berenice, and incest was, of course, one of the primary taboos of contemporary Judaism.*² Saul is therefore contrasting the king's 'expertise in Jewish customs and laws' with his overt breaking of those same laws and customs; not only by having an affair with his sister but also by bringing Berenice to a court of law.

Likewise, when Saul was brought before the court of Felix and his wife Drusilla, Saul spoke to the

governor about 'justice, self-control, and the judgment to come', at which point Felix became agitated and threw Saul out of the court:

Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess, and he sent for Saul and heard him concerning the faith in Jesus. And as he (Saul) reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, 'Go your way for this time; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.'^{B34}

Instead of talking about 'Jesus and faith', Saul concentrates on 'self-control and justice', which makes Felix rather angry. But why? Again, this passage makes little sense unless one also has at hand Josephus' description of Felix having taken Drusilla from her former husband in direct contravention of Judaic law. So here are two 'governors' and 'justices of the peace', and both were in

contravention of Judaic law themselves. In fact, their transgressions were worse than the charges brought before Saul-Josephus himself and he, being both eloquent and sardonic to an inordinate degree, was able to use this to his considerable advantage.

The important thing to note here is that the vast majority of the adherents to Simple Judaism (Christianity) would have been totally ignorant of this ironic, almost humorous subtext to the book of Acts. Indeed, the only people outside Judaea who would have been aware of these barbed, carping comments are those who had also read the secular accounts of Judaeian history written by Josephus himself. Steve Mason says of this synergy between Acts and Josephus:

What is peculiar here is that the narrative of Acts almost assumes knowledge of an

account such as Josephus.

But the fact that ... Acts seems to almost ride 'piggyback' on Josephus' accounts, forces us to examine more closely the relationship between these two works.

Close inspection of the many similarities between Josephus and Luke-Acts, indicates that (the author) probably knew the writings of his famous Jewish contemporary. He appears to build his case for Christianity squarely upon the foundations of Josephus' case for (Simple) Judaism. If he is not doing so, the coincidences are remarkable.³⁵ (my brackets)

It is entirely possible that an independent author of Luke and Acts was using the works of Josephus for his own purposes, to embellish his text with real historical events. But, when taking all of these similarities together, including the similar events, style, genre, and hidden subtext, the only logical conclusion is that Saul-Josephus wrote Luke and Acts himself,

just as I suspected when I wrote the book *Jesus* many years ago. This conclusion is doubly reinforced by the fact that we have already noted that Josephus was himself a prolific contributor to the New Testament – in the guise of Saul (St Paul). Saul-Josephus was most certainly both a secular and religious author of incredible profligacy, and so he may well have authored most of the New Testament as we know it.

This would mean that it was Saul-Josephus himself who was making fun of both the king and the governor of Judaea. This would add another dimension to this irascible irony, for he would have been indicating to anyone who knew these inner details that it was he, Saul-Josephus, who was the moral authority in Judaea, and not the short-tempered,

hypocritical rulers that he had been brought before. He would also have been deliberately composing a gospel with hidden layers of reality and meaning and, by inference, he would have been ridiculing the adherents of Simple Judaism themselves for being truly simple in not understanding the full import or implications of his 'religious' works. Saul-Josephus was gathering adherents to his new creed and, in a triumph of smug satisfaction, he was simultaneously mocking them. You cannot get much more conceited than that.

These links between Luke, Acts and the secular texts of Saul-Josephus also place an earliest possible date on the composition of the gospels. All of the gospels mention (predictively) the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70,^{B36} and the second description from Luke

comes straight out of Josephus' *Jewish War*.

And as some spoke of the Temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, 'As for these things which you behold, the days will come, in which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.'^{B37}

For the days shall come upon you, that your enemies shall cast a trench about you, and compass you round, and keep you in on every side. And shall ... not leave in thee one stone upon another; because you knew not the time of your visitation.^{B38}

The reference to a trench 'compassing you' is a reference to the great wall and trench that the Romans built around Jerusalem during the siege of that city.

However, the *Jewish War* was penned in the mid to late AD 70s, and this is one of the prime reasons for theologians placing the composition for both Luke and Acts (and the other

gospels) after this date. But if we were to include the verses in Luke and Acts that have been extracted from *Antiquities* as well, then these gospels may have been written in the AD 80s. Of course, Luke may not have been the first gospel to have been written, and many theologians cite Mark as being the primary source, with Luke and Matthew following, but even Mark's short (said to be predictive) mention of the destruction of Jerusalem points to a post AD 70 date.

The most popular theory among theologians is that the three synoptic gospels not only copied each other (in whichever order), but also drew upon a source that no longer exists, which is known as the Quell or Q. So who was the author of Q? Well, if one subtracts the common gospel material that has not been drawn from the Gospel of

Luke (or Mark), we are left with a large number of sayings of Jesus. Thus it seems likely that Q was an original text from the Galilean Sect, perhaps something akin to the Christian Book of Common Prayer, containing the sayings of Jesus. On to this Q material, the author of Luke (Saul-Josephus) has added a potted history of the first century life of John the Baptist and Jesus, and this material was subsequently copied by the other authors of the Synoptic Gospels (John's gospel is largely independent of the Synoptics). However, this subsequent material, which converts Jesus into a poor, persecuted, pacifist and spiritual individual, has Saul-Josephus' fingerprints all over it. It even begins to mimic the life of Saul-Josephus himself, as we shall see, which is deeply suspicious.

All in all, the evidence for the orthodox date and authorship of the New Testament texts is flimsy in the extreme. In addition, this same scholarship confidently asserts that these texts were written long after the events they describe, and thus they cannot be considered reliable in any way. But this argument is condescending nonsense, promoted mostly by the lower ranks of the clergy, for it presumes that the disciples were illiterate and could not keep a simple diary. The insistence by the clergy that Jesus was a lowly carpenter is a similar deliberate deception that subtly reinforces this idea.

There is also a presumption that we know very little of these events because this was a pre-literate era. But nothing could be further from the truth. The copious works of the Talmud,


Saul's Epistles and the works of Josephus Flavius, indicate very clearly that there was assiduous record keeping in this era and region; for it was not just Saul-Josephus' own historical notes that were comprehensive, but also those of his competitors, about whom he often complains. This was an era when every historian had an agenda to pass on (as some do to this day), but that does not mean that the disciples or their scribes could not keep a diary and a record of the events of the first century AD. This is especially so when one realises that Jesus was actually a prince and a king, albeit a monarch in exile and without a throne. He would nevertheless have been highly educated and comfortably rich, and so he is likely to have had a personal secretary to assist in any record keeping.

All things to all men

As we have seen, Saul-Josephus had been a Judaic evangelist during the AD 50s. He was supposed to be promoting the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James, but clearly he had strayed from the original script during his second tour and had begun preaching his new form of Simple Judaism to the Gentiles. As we have seen, Simple Judaism was originally James' idea, as a concession to the highly insistent young Saul-Josephus; but the latter's evangelism proved so effective, and his message so appealing, that he soon began to outstrip the power and influence of the original Galilean Church. This evangelism would have been doubly effective if Saul-Josephus had gathered Roman prefects and consuls among his congregation (like Titus Flavius

Clemens).

But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews that dwelt at Damascus (Qumran), proving that this is the Christ.^{B39}

Simple Judaism, without all the confusing laws of Leviticus and especially without circumcision, had proved to be a great hit with the Gentiles in the Greek and Roman provinces. Simple Judaism had also adopted a few of the well-established pagan festivals, and relabelled them as being central to this new creed. The celebration of Mithras turned into Christmas, while the Egypto-Phoenician spring festival of Ast  (Isis) or Astarte became the Christian Aster or Easter. Saul-Josephus even kept the Egyptian symbolism of Ast's egg, which had originally signified her role as a fertility goddess and which

was central to the original spelling of her name. Thus the Easter egg was added to Christian symbolism, despite it not being found in any Judaic or Christian text. In a similar fashion, the traditional symbolism of Isis and Horus (Ast and Heru) was transformed into the Madonna and Child symbolism, with Mary and Jesus adopting an identical pose. As Saul said, 'I am all things to all men', which can be roughly translated as, 'I'll say anything for a dollar or shekel'.

While Saul-Josephus was becoming very successful, in the year AD 65 this was a competition that had still not been completely won. Of the major sects of Judaism in Judaea in this era, the Galilean Sect of Judaism was still a powerful group controlled by an influential (and very rich) aristocracy who had just gained a

foothold in the high priesthood at Jerusalem; the traditional Sadducees and Pharisees still hoped to rule Jerusalem, but were slipping in popularity and influence; and while all this was going on, the Romans desperately tried to keep a lid on anyone fomenting revolt. Saul-Josephus' new Church of Simple Judaism was in danger of being squeezed out of existence, between the tri-cornered jaws of Galileanism, traditional Judaism and the Roman authorities. But then came the Jewish Revolt, the Roman suppression of Judaea, and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Saul-Josephus, ever the pragmatist who always looked after number one (himself), swiftly changed sides and fought for the Romans (he may already have been working as a

Roman spy). Now, as a victor in this great battle, Saul-Josephus was sitting in comparative luxury in Rome (or Jabneh), with an emperor for a patron and power to exercise. Money and great influence were just a whim away. Want to own all the priceless historical texts of Judaea? Just ask. Want to suppress an annoying sect of Judaism? Just have a quiet word with the governor. Suddenly, Saul-Josephus was in a position to crush both the traditional and the new radical Judaic beliefs; and that which he could not completely crush, he could delete from history by burning their records. Saul-Josephus was now in a position to filter every piece of theology and history that had ever been written in Judaea, and especially any texts that may have slandered himself.

We know that Josephus had

many a detractor,
because he wrote
extensively about
the slanders they
made.

Nevertheless,
certain despicable
persons have
reviewed my
history, taking it as
a prize essay like
those set for boys
at school. What an
extraordinary
accusation and
libel![J42](#)

I (now) address a
few words to
Justus (of Tiberias)
who has produced
his own account of
these affairs, and
to others who, while professing to write
history, care little for the truth and have no
scruples about falsehoods.[J43](#)



*Fig
6.2 Mother
and child
symbolism of
Isis and Horus
(the Madonna
and Child).*

Among the many who lined up to deride Saul-Josephus were Apion and Justus of Tiberias, the son of Pistus. However, because much of the history of Judaea was filtered through the offices of Saul-Josephus at Jabneh, we no longer have extant versions of these histories. Nevertheless, we are led to believe, from the comments made by Photius, that Justus of Tiberias wrote a book similar to Saul-Josephus' *Antiquities* which was 'very concise in its language' – something that Saul-Josephus was demonstrably not capable of. We shall uncover Justus' real name and history in a later chapter.

This is, of course, another reason why we cannot find any real historical evidence for the biblical Jesus within the biblical record, or within any texts other than Josephus'.

As we have seen, many authors, surveying this paucity of evidence, have concluded that Jesus must have been a mythical figure. It has even been suggested that Saul created this mythical hero and based his exploits upon his own life, as there are many similarities to be found here; thus Saul-Josephus would not only have been the world's greatest historian, author, evangelist and pope, he would also have been the creator of a mythical Son of God character who was created in his own image.

While such a spectacle would have undoubtedly been very appealing to a boastful egocentrist like Saul-Josephus, I think that enough information is gradually surfacing to indicate that there was a real character called Jesus-Justus. The biblical Jesus (Jesus-Justus) was Jesus of Gamala,

the son of Judas-Zamaris of Gamala and the leader of the Galilean Sect (the Fourth Sect of Judaism). So here we have a second-generation leader of a new, radical sect of Judaism who had many a dispute with the Jerusalem authorities over taxation – a theme that is very close to the heart of the gospel story. Furthermore, in the works of Josephus and Acts of the Apostles it is Saul-Josephus who is battling with those very same rebels, as the army commander in charge of Galilee and Gamala.

It is unlikely in the extreme that Saul-Josephus would have created a hero-figure in his own image, and then presented him as an enemy of himself! Instead, what must have happened here is that Jesus was a real historical figure of some standing within Judaeen society – he was, after all, known as

Christ Jesus (King Jesus) – a figure that Saul-Josephus was forced, very reluctantly, to look up to. Even the early Church fathers freely admitted to Jesus' royal connections, and so the Slavonic version of Josephus records that an inscription once hung in the ruins of the Temple which read:

A fourth inscription read, 'Jesus, a king who did not reign, was crucified by the Jews because he foretold the destruction of the city and the desolation of the Temple.'⁴⁴

Jesus was a real secular king, although he was a king without a throne, just as the inscription says. And, it likely that King Jesus not only foretold the destruction of the Temple, but was also a key player in that very same rebellion and eventual destruction.

In the book *Cleopatra* I demonstrated that Jesus was not simply

a royal but most probably descended from Julius Caesar, Queen Cleopatra of Egypt and King Phraates IV of Parthia (Persia), and thus he was an inordinately well-connected royal prince and king in exile. Indeed, in having an ancestry that incorporated the leaders and royalty of most of the known world, the biblical Jesus would have had the pedigree and opportunity to unite the world as its sole monarch; just as the Star Prophecy foretold. This is why, when Jesus entered Jerusalem on the eve of the Passover, some of the population greeted him with the acclamation:

And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, 'Hosanna blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that comes in the name of the Lord.'[B45](#)

The term *hosanna* is often deliberately

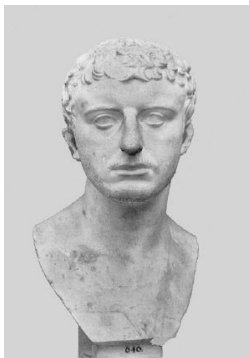
distorted into denoting a prayer to god, but it actually means 'save me'. In other words, a logical translation of these verses might imply that the population were asking Jesus to save them (from the Romans or the established priesthood) and to establish a new Judaic kingdom, similar to the one created by King David.

While the evidence supporting this hypothesis, which was put forward in the book *Cleopatra*, was in some places only circumstantial, this scenario would certainly explain Saul-Josephus' comment about the rebel Jewish factions during the Jewish Civil War:

What most encouraged (the rebels) in undertaking this war, was an ambiguous oracle in their sacred writings, of how, 'one from their country should become king of the whole world.'^{J46}

This was the Star Prophecy; but this version of the Star Prophecy is intriguing, for Num 24:17 does not mention 'the whole world'. It is therefore probable that Saul-Josephus, the author of this interpretation of the oracle, was fully aware that King Jesus (Christ Jesus) was descended from all the primary leaders and monarchs of the known world, and therefore he was the king who was going to become 'king of the whole world'. But Saul-Josephus eventually distorted this oracle into a prediction that Vespasian would become emperor of Rome, for Vespasian was hailed as emperor in the East (Judaea), and the Emperor of Rome was indeed the master of much of the known world.

Ghost writer



*Fig
6.3 Marble
bust said to be
of Saul-
Josephus.
Carlesberg
Glyptotek,
Copenhagen.*

The central theme of Part I of this book is that Saul was Josephus. If this theory is true, then both of these characters should not only have identical lives and chronologies, but also hold the same ideals and beliefs. But if this is so, then surely such a similarity would have been spotted years ago.

In fact, this equivalence *was* observed many years ago, but this was not an era in which such a discussion could have prospered. During his great translation of the works of Josephus,

William Whiston came across a text called *A Homily Concerning Hades*, and Whiston thought that this must be another extract from Josephus' copious library. In a typically dogged fashion he sought out feature after feature that pointed towards this text being from the quill of Josephus. Then, as an afterthought, Whiston states:

Though I must confess the author of this fragment refers so often to the books of the New Testament, and especially to Saul's Epistles, that he seems to have embraced Catholic Christianity.^{J47}

It appears to me very evident that when Josephus wrote his *Antiquities* ... he was in his own conscience a Nazarene Christian, and it may not be amiss to inquire at what time he became such.^{J48}

So the content of Josephus' works mirror those in the New Testament, and this should not be unexpected if the

two sets of literature came from the same author. There are many examples of equivalence to be found between the biblical gospels and the books of Josephus, and some examples are given below. In the first of these, we find verses in which Josephus seems to be emulating the life and deeds of Jesus:

Jesus. And it came to pass, that after three days they found (a twelve-year old Jesus) in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors (of law), both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.^{B49} (my brackets)

Josephus. Moreover, when I was a child, and about fourteen years of age, I was commended by all for the love I had to learning; on which account the high priests and principal men of the city came then frequently to me together, in order to know my opinion about the accurate understanding of points of the law.^{J52}

So both Josephus and Jesus were precocious children who were able to astound the learned men of Jerusalem during their *bar mitsvah* celebration. But if we move on a few years we find a similar confluence of thought. When Jesus ‘died’ he was placed in a cave-like tomb, and so Josephus ensured that he had much the same experience.

Jesus. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock.[B53](#)

Josephus. Josephus ... withdrew himself from the enemy when he was in the midst of them, and leaped into a certain deep pit, whereto there adjoined a large den at one side of it.[J54](#)

To be discovered on the third day:

Jesus. In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the (third day), came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the

sepulchre.[B55](#)

Josephus. Thus he concealed himself two days; but on the third day, when they had taken a woman who had been with them, he was discovered.[J56](#)

By his friend Nicodemus:

Jesus. And after Joseph of Arimathaea ... came also Nicodemus...[B57](#)

Josephus. (Josephus) was invited to come up (out of the cave) in order to be punished, until Vespasian sent Nicanor to him; for he was one that was well known to Josephus.[J58](#)

It was only later that people found out he was not dead:

Jesus. But when they heard that he was alive, and had been seen by her, they did not believe it.[B59](#)

Josephus. Yet it was found that the death of Josephus was a fiction; and ... they understood that he was alive, and was among the Romans.[J62](#)

As I said earlier, I don't think the previous quotes mean that Josephus was Jesus, or that Josephus created a fictional character called Jesus based upon his life history; rather it is more likely that Josephus wanted to emulate his hero-figure, who was a real historical character. But, of course, if Josephus was Saul, then surely Saul would also seek to emulate Jesus in a similar manner. Sure enough, we find verses that mimic each other in their respective arrests:

Jesus. Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him.[B63](#)

Saul. The chief captain commanded (Saul) to be brought into the castle ... And they bound him with thongs.[B64](#)

Both Jesus and Saul were influential enough to be taken before the high

priest. It is worth noting that the Gospel of John has managed to mention a High Priest Annas for an event that is supposed to have occurred in AD 30 or 33, when the only Annas from this era had actually retired before AD 12. The high priest that Saul was taken before in AD 56 was, of course, Ananias.

Jesus. And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.[B65](#)

Saul. And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders ... who informed the governor against Saul.[B66](#)

And in both cases the impudent witness gets a slap across the face:

Jesus. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand (on the face), saying, Do you answer the high priest so?[B67](#)

Saul. And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite Saul on the mouth (face).[B68](#)

And a little roughing up, just for good measure:

Jesus. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.[B69](#)

Saul. The chief captain ... bade that he should be examined by scourging.[B70](#)

But the most senior person there was interested in this curious individual and his new philosophy, and wanted to know more:

Jesus. And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him for a long time ... and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words.[B72](#)

Saul. And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him

concerning the faith in Christ.[B73](#)

But a close relation or friend sneaked in to see what was going on:

Jesus. And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.[B74](#)

Saul. And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul (Saul).[B75](#)

But finally the Roman procurator threw out the charges, and indicated that he should be released:

Jesus. And Pilate ... said unto them ... I have found no fault in this man ... Neither has Herod, for I referred you to him. Be assured, then, that he has done nothing to deserve death. I will therefore release him.[B76](#)

Saul. And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us ... have found that he had committed nothing worthy

of death ... I have determined to send him (to Rome).[B77](#)

Jesus of Gamala's crucifixion did not actually happen in this manner, as we shall see shortly, and so there was no trial or scourging as far as we can tell. What Saul-Josephus appears to have done, in order to spice up the gospel texts, is to add some of the details from his own life-story in order to sell a better sob-story to the public. And what better story to tell than his own; because it made him look even more like the messiah, the christ, the new King Jesus of the Jews. Saul has been deliberately blurring the boundaries between his own life-story and that of Jesus, no doubt for his own egotistical glorification.

The proof of this comes from Saul's letter to the Corinthians where he is forced to retract any perception

that he was the messiah and not Jesus:

But I exhort you, brothers ... that there be no divisions among you ... for it has been declared to me concerning you ... that there are contentions among you ... Was Saul crucified for you, or were you baptized in the name of Saul? I thank god that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name.^{B78}

It is unlikely that the congregation at Corinth could have confused a baptism by Saul for a baptism in the name of Saul, and so it is pretty certain that Saul (Josephus) must have been preaching a gospel in his own name – usurping the life and social standing of Jesus himself. But Saul (Josephus) was found out and forced to make a public retraction; and since this apology engendered some loss of credibility he must have been under great pressure to do this. Thus either Saul was not in

complete command of his Church at this time, or his congregation threatened to hit him where it hurt the most – in his wallet.

A leader can only lead if he or she has followers, and it looks as though Saul-Josephus' attempt to completely usurp the life of Jesus failed when the congregation threatened to walk out. As much as it may have stuck in his gullet to do so, Saul-Josephus would still have to hold up the icon of Jesus for his followers to worship, rather than his own image.

Assassins

There are also some general similarities between the texts of Josephus and those of the New Testament. The first of these concerns the enigmatic Egyptian False Prophet,

who has already been identified as the biblical Jesus. Even if the New Testament is somewhat tardy in identifying all of its characters, Josephus is not normally, and so when these convenient and nebulous hypocorisms or nicknames appear in the works of Josephus Flavius it is quite obvious that he has something to hide. In this case, the cover-up concerns the biblical Jesus' armed assault on Jerusalem. But first, the army has to be assembled in the wilderness:

Josephus:

But there was an Egyptian False Prophet that did the Jews more mischief than the former; for he was a cheat, and pretended to be a prophet also, and got together thirty thousand men that were deluded by him; these he led round about from the wilderness.^{J79}

Gospels:

Then are you not the Egyptian who before

these days caused a riot, and led four thousand men of the Sicarii (assassins) out into the wilderness?[B82](#)

Gospels:

And moving from there Jesus ... went up into a mountain and sat there. And great crowds came to him. And the disciples gave (food) to the crowd ... and those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.[B83](#)

The second quote usually uses the term ‘murderer’. However, in the Greek it uses *sicarii* σικαριος, the daggermen assassins who used their curved *sicarii* daggers to assassinate the Jerusalem leaders. But since we know that there were Sicarii, like Judas Iscariot, among Jesus’ disciples, and since we know that the last version of this verse did indeed refer to the biblical Jesus, it is abundantly clear that the title ‘Egyptian False Prophet’ was actually a reference to Jesus

himself. Thus Jesus can be seen here assembling his armed troops out in the wilderness, prior to his attack on Jerusalem. This topic is covered more fully in my other works, so this is just a brief summary of these events:

Gospels:

And (Jesus) went to the Mount of Olives ... a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came with lanterns and torches and weapons ... the disciples said. 'shall we smite them with the sword?' ... Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, 'do you come to us, like against a Zealot, with swords and staves?'^{B84}

Josephus:

(The Egyptian) got together thirty thousand men ... on the Mount of Olives, and was ready to break into Jerusalem by force from that place ... But Felix prevented his attempt, and met him with his Roman soldiers.^{J85}

The New Testament tries to down-play this event into a meeting of just a few

(armed) disciples, but the version by Josephus demonstrates the true scale of this assault – thirty thousand armed men. That Josephus was right in his great magnitude of the attack is borne out by the Gospel of John, which says that a *speira* σπειρα of men (a band of men) came to arrest Jesus. But a *speira* is more commonly termed a *cohort*, and both of these are Roman terms for a tenth of a legion, or some 600 heavily armed soldiers. Clearly, this was a major insurrection being thwarted by the might of the Roman army, and not a small gathering of disciples being rounded up by a few local ‘police constables’.

This armed assault on Jerusalem represents a major similarity between the biblical accounts and those of Josephus. However, there are lesser ones and the first of these is in regard

to women:

Saul:

But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.[B86](#)

Josephus:

The woman, says the law, is in all things inferior to the man. Let her be submissive, not for her humiliation, but for her direction.[J87](#)

But this female servility does not reflect the law, as Josephus tries to indicate, it is simply a comment in the Book of Genesis. So this comment rather reflects Josephus' distrust of women, and in this matter he has a willing partner in his *alter ego*, Saul.

Another similarity is to be found in the basic principles of Simple Judaism. Saul, as we know, was very fond of a simplified form of Judaism based around the Ten Commandments of Moses, while in a very similar

fashion Josephus says:

Josephus:

While there are a vast number of other matters (laws) in our sacred books ... I will exhort all those that peruse these books to apply their minds to ... the mind of our legislator (or Moses and his ten commandments).[J88](#) (my brackets)

Both Saul and Josephus also seem to share the same attitude towards circumcision. Now circumcision was the great shibboleth of the Jews and no true male Jew is complete (*sic*) without being circumcised. Yet here we have two men, who both profess to be good Jews, who have simply cast aside this great tradition.

Saul:

What advantage then has the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? They saw that I had been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision.[B89](#)

Josephus:

At this time it was that two great men ... came to me ... and when the Jews would force them to be circumcised, if they would stay among them. I would not permit them to have any force put upon them, but said to them, 'Every one ought to worship God according to his own inclinations, and not to be constrained by force.'^{J92}

Clearly, both Saul and Josephus were against circumcision. This was quite a reasonable position for a Roman to take, as circumcision had long been frowned upon in the Empire, but it was most unusual for a Jew and a rabbi to take this perspective. All of this demonstrates the extreme closeness, in both thought and creed, between Saul and Josephus, which is yet another reason why I have already declared them to be one and the same person.

Crucifixion

The primary problem with these equivalences between Saul and Josephus is that they all occur in the 50s and 60s AD. This is far too late for the orthodox life of Jesus, but it is completely in line with the revised chronology being forged in these chapters. So how and why did the gospels settle on such an early date for Jesus' mission and death? An intriguing answer to this may be that conventional gospel history is simply a convenient misunderstanding of what really happened. Perhaps there was a hero-figure who died in AD 33, but he was someone else entirely. This may sound like wishful thinking on my part, in order to justify my chronological readjustment, but it is not. In fact, the particular hero-figure who died in AD 33 was actually John the Baptist.

According to Saul-Josephus,

John the Baptist was imprisoned and murdered by Herod Antipas because John was gathering a great following and Herod Antipas suspected that he was fomenting a rebellion. Although Saul-Josephus does not implicate Pontius Pilate in this affair, all of this happened during his procuratorship, as we shall see. This in itself is a very similar story to that of Jesus, who was also portrayed as a radical rebel during the rule of Pontius Pilate.

Closely linked to this rebellion was John's criticism of Herod Antipas' illegal marriage, a criticism which was no doubt being used to undermine Antipas' reputation and stir up unrest. The details of this marriage are as follows: Herod Antipas had lodged in Rome with his half-brother, Herod Philip, and fallen in love with his wife, Herodias, the sister of King Agrippa I.

See the genealogy for details. But this marriage proposal was unlawful, as John pointed out (see Leviticus 18:16). The gospels pick up on this same salacious story and elaborate it with further details:

For Herod had laid hold on John (the Baptist), and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for you to (marry) her. Herod would have put John to death, but he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias (Salome) danced before them, and pleased Herod. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she ... said, 'Give me here John the Baptist's head on a charger'.[B95](#)

While it is entirely probable that Herodias wanted to be rid of John in this manner, because he was stirring up the populace against her marriage with Herod Antipas, the gospels have

negated to tell us the full political ramifications of John's death. Unfortunately for Herod Antipas, there was only one other problem with his illegal marriage, and that was the reaction of his first wife. Antipas was already married to Phasaelis, a daughter of King Aretas of Nabataea, and following Antipas' second marriage she was sent home. King Aretas was not entirely happy with this sleight upon his family honour, and sent an army up to Judaea to teach this upstart tetrarch a lesson.^{J96}

Aretas' army routed the army of Antipas, and the latter had to flee to Vitellius, the Roman commander of Syria, who marched two legions down to Petra in order to restore order within these feuding kingdoms. However, with Petra being somewhat impregnable, the legions achieved very

little and marched back home again. Some of the Jews, no doubt the Essenes and the Galileans in particular, blamed this humiliating defeat of Tetrarch Antipas on divine intervention, because Antipas has just killed John the Baptist. However, this intervention was more secular than divine, for King Aretas was assisted in his military efforts by unnamed ‘fugitives’ who were resident in the lands of Aurania and Bethanya to the east.

... the treachery of some fugitives, who, although they were in the province of Herod Philip (Jordano-Syria), joined with Aretas’ army.^{J97}

Who were these ‘fugitives’ who came to the assistance of Aretas? They came from the province ruled by Herod Philip, or southern Syria and northern

Jordan, and since it was Herod Philip's wife who had been taken by Herod Antipas, that is not so surprising. So which 'fugitives' in Philip's land would have had a private army large enough to defeat Herod Antipas, and who in Philip's land would have wished to revenge the death of John the Baptist? The is only one logical answer to this, and so these 'fugitives' just have to be the private army of Judas-Zamaris, Jesus of Gamala and the Galilean Sect; and it would not be surprising for them to assist King Aretas against Tetrarch Antipas, if the latter had just murdered one of their great leaders: John the Baptist.

The most significant point, however, is the date in which all this must have occurred. The attack by King Aretas on Herod Antipas is

thought to have occurred in AD 34, because that is when Saul-Josephus says it happened.*³ It certainly could not be much later than this because Herod Philip is said to have died in AD 34 and John the Baptist's comments would only have been pertinent if Herod Philip was still alive – as soon as he died, Herod Antipas would have been relatively free to marry Herodius (his first marriage notwithstanding). The best guess is that the battle occurred in AD 34, and so the adverse comments about the marriage and the resulting death of John the Baptist must have occurred in or around AD 33, while Herod Philip was still alive. But this gives theologians a problem, for Jesus' entire ministry, arrest and crucifixion is said to have occurred after John's death, and so it is unlikely in the extreme that Jesus could have

been crucified in AD 33, the orthodox date for the crucifixion, if John died in the same year. There is simply not enough time in which the gospel story could have occurred.

The only logical alternative is that the tradition of a significant biblical character dying in AD 33, during the Roman administration of Pontius Pilate, belongs to John the Baptist. It was John the Baptist who Pontius Pilate condemned to death, not Jesus. However, if it was John who died in AD 33, and not Jesus, then this gives us great latitude in suggesting that Jesus died in a much later era, and thus plenty of scope for adjusting the biblical chronology. As we shall see shortly, the texts of Irenaeus, Josephus and Justus of Tiberias suggest that Jesus lived well into his fifties; that he survived a crucifixion in AD 70; and

died in the first years of the reign of Trajan (c. AD 101).

Golgotha

One of the most dramatic similarities between the works of Josephus Flavius and Saul concerns the crucifixion itself. The biblical account of this climactic event is probably familiar, but perhaps a quick reminder is due:

So they took Jesus ... to the place called in Hebrew Golgotha. There they crucified him with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them ... In order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the sabbath, they asked (the Roman governor) that ... they might be taken away... Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him leave. So he came and took away his body ... Jesus said to the woman, 'Mary.' She turned and said to him in Hebrew,

‘Rabbi! (you are alive!)’.[B98](#)

Note that the person who petitioned the governor to take Jesus down from the cross was called Joseph (of Arimathaea). This is interesting, for Josephus says of a strikingly similar incident:

And when I was sent by Titus Caesar to a certain village called Tekoa ... as I came back I saw many captives crucified, and remembered three of them as my former acquaintance. I was very sorry at this in my mind, and went with tears in my eyes to Titus, and told him of them; so he immediately commanded them to be taken down, and to have the greatest care taken of them, in order to their recovery; yet two of them died under the physician's hands, while the third survived.[J99](#)

In both of these accounts three revolutionaries were crucified. In both cases they were taken down early, on the command of the governor, which

was either Pilate or Titus. Significantly, only one of these three victims survived in both accounts. Even more interesting is the fact that in both cases the man who made the petition to the governor knew the three crucified men well, his name was Joseph(us), and he was also a 'secret' disciple of Jesus.

Verses like this knock great holes in the theory that Josephus Flavius was Jesus, or that Josephus has fabricated a new history that portrayed a mythical Jesus who was based upon his own life-story. The true import of this paragraph is that Josephus Flavius (Saul) was the potential saviour of three crucified men who had been former acquaintances, only one of whom survived. In other words, the startling conclusion that we are forced to face is that Josephus Flavius may

well have been Joseph(us) of Arimathaea. Had this been so, then of course he would have been a 'secret' disciple of Jesus, because it is highly unlikely that Josephus would have confessed to Vespasian or Titus that he had formerly been a key component of the revolutionary sect that the Romans had been fighting. By necessity, Saul-Josephus' continuing links with the Galilean Church of Jesus and James would have been a secret.

However, when looking at this same history from the orthodox biblical viewpoint, just who was this mysterious Joseph of Arimathaea, who came striding into the biblical story at the very end like a conquering hero, just like King Richard I was portrayed by Sean Connery in the film *Robin Hood*? Unfortunately, nobody knows, and so yet another pivotal biblical

character is missing from the historical record. In a later chapter on the Grail mysteries, it will be conclusively demonstrated that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was indeed Josephus Flavius. Yet this rather puts a different spin on the final verses of the gospel stories, for if this analysis is true then the man who took Jesus down from the cross was actually Saul-Josephus, his greatest sworn enemy. But there was a reason for this.

While this claim might be revolutionary, the possibility that Joseph of Arimathaea was Saul-Josephus would actually give us a much better understanding of the crucifixion event and its true location. The precise location of the crucifixion is unknown, but the Bible says of this event:

And he bearing his cross went forth into a

place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha. Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the middle. [B102](#)

Here is the standard interpretation of the crucifixion, with Jesus hanging on the cross between two others, at a location known as Golgotha Γολγοθα, or the Place of the Skull. The Greek word *golgotha* comes from the Aramaic *golgoleth* גלגלת which also means ‘skull’.

Traditionally there have been two proposed sites for the crucifixion of Jesus. The first of these is the Garden Tomb just outside the Damascus Gate, but although this attracts thousands of faithful tourists it has conclusively been shown to date from the Byzantine era rather than the first century. The second location is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, whose

claim rests on a mention of Emperor Hadrian building a temple to Jupiter on the site of the crucifixion, which was then rebuilt as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. But again the site has no first century tombs in the area and it would seem unusual to have a place of execution so close to Herod's palace. It is also not on a hill, and the crucifixion site of Golgotha or Calvary was always envisioned as being a hill.

In addition, while the location of the present church is sometimes said to have been outside the city wall during the first century AD, the majority of maps of the Herodian city indicate that it was actually inside the city. The map and the huge model of the Herodian city in the Jerusalem Museum demonstrate this very well. It is unlikely in the extreme that a crucifixion site would have been

inside the city walls, as the act of crucifixion would have defiled the city. Besides, Hebrews 13:12 says that the crucifixion was outside one of the city gates. This is probably why some maps, with a distinct Christian influence, try to show the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to be outside the walls; for if the church was inside the wall it undermines the whole rationale for the church being there in the first place.

Incidentally, while the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is disappointing from the outside, the internal rotunda is quite a lofty and impressive hemisphere. The reason for this design and other similar rotundas is given in the book *Scota*. There are a few errors in the execution of this particular design, with some of the impressive granite pillars being up to 30cm out of

position relative to the rotunda; so either the designer liked the odd tipple, or earthquakes have shifted the entire structure. However, this fine edifice is completely ruined by the Tomb of Christ, which was rebuilt in the nineteenth century in a severe neo-Baroque style and must represent the ugliest carbuncle to have ever forced its way into a cathedral – especially since it is now held up with a series of rusty RSJs.

Inside this cramped neo-Baroque dungeon one can observe a number of deranged souls who have lost all touch with reality, through the excessive use of religion as a narcotic. Apparently, the CIA spent many hundreds of millions of dollars investigating the possibility of mind control, but they would have done better to send a few operatives to the

Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Wailing Wall and the Ka'ba in Mecca; for the mind-control techniques used there have been honed and refined over thousands of years, and are surprisingly and quite bafflingly effective.

It is also worth pointing out that this carbuncle of a tomb has, upon its summit, a conical spire in the Nabataean fashion, exactly like the one on Absalom's tomb in the Kidron Valley. Since this style of architecture is not at all common in Jerusalem, it is almost as though the architect of this feature (and this may be an earlier feature of this 'tomb', which has been rebuilt several times over the millennia) was pointing towards the Kidron Valley. There may be a reason for this, as we shall see shortly.

So, with so little information to

go on, and with such an expanse of time having elapsed since the era in which these events actually occurred, is it possible to make any headway at all in this quest? Can we find the true location of Jesus' crucifixion?

Actually, this may well be possible, but we need to realign the entire crucifixion scenario slightly. The date was AD 70, during the siege of Jerusalem. The Temple Mount had just fallen into Roman hands, but the upper city was still holding out. Jesus and his family were forced to surrender at this time and quite obviously a summary execution had been organised. Three of these senior rebel leaders had been nailed up on crosses, but Titus, the Roman commander, was not necessarily aware of this.

Bearing this in mind, the first snippets of information to assist us

come from the Epistle to the Hebrews (13:12) which says that the crucifixion took place outside the city gate. As already mentioned, this report would seem to exclude the Church of the Holy Sepulchre from this quest. The only annoying aspect of this report is that the exact gate is not mentioned, which leaves a lot of ground to cover. But it is known that the Romans often crucified people on prominent spots near or along major roads, to serve as a warning of what would happen to those who challenged their authority. A good example of this was the crucifixion of 6,000 supporters of Spartacus in 71 BC, whose crosses lined the Appian Way for many miles.

In addition to this, we are looking for a spot that was known as Golgotha, or the Place of the Skull. This mention of a skull has convinced

many theologians that Golgotha was actually a cemetery, and the short distance between the crucifixion and Jesus' tomb would seem to reinforce that view. Furthermore, Hebrews 13:10-12 says that Jesus was crucified near the Altar of the Sin Sacrifice, which Professor Ory Mazar claims was on the Mount of Olives. Since this altar was said to be outside the fortress (the Antonia Fortress) and outside the city gate, this location appears to be entirely possible. This is also a significant spot to crucify a rebel leader, for it is the location in which sacrifices were made to atone for sins, and no doubt the Romans considered Jesus to be the greatest of sinners.

What we are looking for, therefore, is a main road that cuts through a cemetery that lies on a hill just outside the Antonia gate to the Old

City, near to the Mount of Olives. So do these various directions make sense? Is there such a site? Actually, there is, and the confirmation of this site is to be found in the works of Josephus Flavius.

The beauty of this new association between Josephus Flavius and Joseph(us) of Arimathaea is that we now have a much more detailed description of the crucifixion event. Josephus says of the three crucified people who had been his former acquaintances:

I was sent by Titus Caesar, with Cerealins and a thousand horsemen, to a certain village called Tekoa, in order to know whether it was a place fit for a camp. As I came back, I saw many captives crucified, and remembered three of them as my former acquaintance.[J103](#)

Josephus was therefore on his way back from a village called Tekoa when

he saw the crucifixion. But where is this place called Tekoa, and what was Josephus really doing there? He says he was appraising if the village was fit for a Roman camp (a fortress), but you do not need 1,000 cavalry for that. Instead, this account is better explained in *The Jewish War*, where Josephus says:

A new legate had been sent to Judaea, Lucilius Bassus ... He first secured the submission of the fortress at Herodium, together with its defenders.[J104](#)

As it happens, Herodium and Tekoa are the same location, the one is the fortress and the other is the village below it. So Josephus was therefore on a mission to take Herodium from the few remaining rebels who were holding out there – who appear to have surrendered without firing so much as

an arrow.

One can well understand why Josephus Flavius (Saul) was sent to see if Herodium (Tekoa) could be used as a garrison fortress for the Romans, for it is an imposing site. The fortress is located on the top of a conical hill that looks so peculiar that Josephus said that the whole hill was man-made. This claim is still repeated in the modern literature on the site and in the tourist guides of Israel. If this is so then this must have been a vast project on a par with the construction of the pyramids, for the hill is over 100 m high and of enormous girth. Unfortunately for this theory, however, if one steps down into the cisterns at the top of the hill it is obvious that the rock the tunnel cuts through is formed of strata, especially one thick strata of a flint-like silicate. Man-made

constructions do not, and cannot, have strata running through their summit; and so Herodium is actually built on the top of a curious-looking but perfectly natural mesa, similar to those found in Monument Valley on the borders of Utah and Arizona. It also has a very ancient-looking round-tower in a plaza at its base, which is similar to the round towers of the Balearic Islands. See the book *Scota* for more details on these towers.

Having inspected the Herodium fortress at Tekoa, Josephus and his cavalry would have been riding northwards towards Jerusalem and thus approaching the Old City from the south. If one did this in Josephus' day (and largely today also) there were two possible routes into the city. The first involved a very steep climb up to the Dung Gate close to the base of the

Temple mount, while the second involves a more leisurely route up the Kidron Valley and into the Lion Gate. Since the Antonia Fortress, the main Roman garrison in Jerusalem, lay just inside the Lion Gate, it would seem to be absolutely certain that Josephus and the returning troops would have ridden up the Kidron Valley and into the Lion Gate.

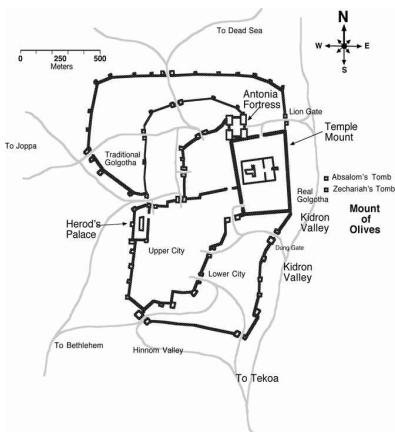


Fig 6.4 Map of first century Jerusalem

The significant point about this, however, is the fact that nearly every inch of the slopes of the Kidron Valley, which is the steep-sided gorge that lies between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives, is a graveyard. It was also the original main road into the old city of Jerusalem, via the Lion Gate. But this is not a later Byzantine or modern graveyard, it is a very ancient site and contains two monolithic tombs that were carved from the bedrock. These tombs are described as being Zechariah's and Absalom's tombs, but these associations are highly unlikely. The method of manufacture and the aesthetic style of Absalom's tomb is pure Nabataean, direct from the famous first century BC rock 'tombs' at Petra. The more southerly tomb of Zechariah has an Egypto-Roman style that

resembles the Syrian pyramid tombs at al-Bara just south of Aleppo. In other words, whoever these tombs once belonged to, they were most probably built at the turn of the first century by Nabatean and Syrian masons and architects.

This dating would mean that these tombs, and much of the rest of the cemetery that covers the Mount of Olives, were already lining the steep sides of the Kidron Valley at the time of Jesus' crucifixion in AD 70. Thus it is more than likely that when Saul-Joseph(us) of Arimathaea returned to Jerusalem from Tekoa, he and his thousand-strong cavalry brigade rode along the main road that used to run along the bottom of the Kidron Valley. There, in the bottom of this deep valley just to the east of the Temple Mount, is where he spotted three of his former

acquaintances, one of whom was the biblical King Jesus-Justus. Once permission had been obtained and Jesus had been taken down from the cross, he was laid in one of the large open rock tombs next to Zechariah's monolithic tomb in the Kidron Valley; not because he was dead, but because first aid was being administered by a physician, just as Josephus relates.

This identification with the Kidron Valley is supported by the *Acts of Pilate*, a second century manuscript that maintains that Jesus was crucified close to where he had been arrested. Jesus was, of course, arrested on the Mount of Olives, which is the great mound of tombs and burials that looms above the steeply-sided Kidron Valley, and so if this manuscript is correct he was crucified there too. Interestingly, there is an old tradition that James was

buried in this very same ‘open’ rock tomb in the Kidron Valley – although there is no reliable history to confirm that rumour, which is based upon an account of Eusebius that indicates that the body of James was thrown from the Temple into the Kidron Valley and buried there. There is also a tradition that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was similarly buried in the Kidron Valley near the burial of James. The inscription inside the ‘open’ rock tomb may well date from the first century AD, but it actually reads:

This the tomb and the *nephesh* of Eleazer, Haniah, Jo'azar, Iehudah, Shimeon, Iohannan, (the) sons of Joseph, son of Obed. (and also) of Joseph and Eleazer (the) sons of Haniah, priests (of the family) of the sons of Hezir.¹⁰⁵

The sons Shimeon (Simon) and Iehudah (Judas) are familiar, but the rest of the inscription is not.

Nevertheless, it is here in the Kidron Valley that the faithful should really be gathering to honour their hero, King Jesus (of Gamala). Having been taken down from the cross by Saul-Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, Jesus was nursed back to health in the ‘tomb of the sons of Joseph’ in the Kidron Valley, which is why an association between his father and the name ‘Joseph’ may have developed in later years.



Fig 6.5 A model of first century Jerusalem. The Antonia Fortress lies inside the city wall of first century Jerusalem, just north of the Temple Mount. The Temple Mount is on the left, and the Lion Gate is just out of sight to the far left.

The evidence suggests that Saul-Joseph(us) of Arimathaea rescued Jesus from the cross. Such a magnanimous act of charity may seem out of character for two bitter adversaries, but this is not necessarily so – especially as Jesus was probably his cousin. Anyway, to Saul-Josephus a gesture of such magnanimity would simply serve to increase his power and ego, because the great King Jesus-Justus, who had once rejected Saul-Josephus, eventually had to be rescued by him. Jesus, he of great esteem and of royal blood, and it is down to Saul-Josephus to save his skin – how the

mighty cousin had fallen. Besides, a living Jesus might be more useful to Saul-Josephus than a dead one, as we shall see later.

One can imagine all the women who are said to have gathered around the cross, including Mary Magdalene, wailing at the feet of Saul-Josephus and begging him to do something – for only Saul-Josephus had the ear of the Roman army commander, Titus, and only he could save the crucified trio. How ecstatically smug Saul-Josephus would have been, and how humbled and humiliated was the Galilean Church of Jesus and James. This was Saul-Josephus' personal glory moment, as victor over all his enemies (courtesy of Vespasian, Titus and a large proportion of the Roman army).

Another important aspect of this new story of the crucifixion is not the

location, but the date. These were events that occurred just after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, and we shall see yet more evidence in support of this date in later chapters. So Jesus' mission and crucifixion occurred during the siege of Jerusalem, and he was crucified in AD 70, just as the previous evidence has already demonstrated. Evidence for this late date can even be seen in the Gospel of Luke, which says that Jesus spoke of the tower of Siloam falling and crushing eighteen men. This tower was one of the many that fortified the outer wall of the city of Jerusalem and Jesus' comment about its toppling is a bit of a mystery, for Rabbinic tradition indicates that there had never been such an event in Jerusalem, because the city is built upon rock.¹⁰⁶

The explanation for this slight

conundrum is that there was one particular traumatic event in the life of this great city when a tower did indeed fall, crushing its defenders, and that was during the siege of Jerusalem in AD 70. This was the middle tower of the north wall, robustly defended by a Jew named Castor, which was toppled by the Roman attackers. Thus it would seem likely that Jesus was again referring to the Jewish War, and this only makes sense if he lived during and after that bloody conflict. Further evidence will suggest that Jesus actually lived to a ripe old age, not succumbing until the third year of Emperor Trajan, or AD 101.

Age of Jesus

The gospel stories end with the crucifixion of Jesus in AD 33 but, as

we have already seen, this represents a confusion, deliberate or otherwise, with the death of John the Baptist in the same year. Perhaps this confusion was deliberate, in order to keep the life of Jesus separate from the life of Saul-Josephus, so that readers did not realise that Jesus and Saul-Josephus were bitter enemies right through the Jewish War. Whatever the reason for this early date in the gospels, it was totally incompatible with a crucifixion in AD 70, after the fall of Jerusalem. But the fact that Jesus lived to a ripe old age is further supported by the accounts of Irenaeus, the Bishop of Lugdunum in Gaul (Lyon) during the second century, who says:

They ... maintain that Jesus preached for one year only, and then suffered in the twelfth month. [In speaking thus,] they are forgetful to their own disadvantage, destroying Jesus' whole work, and robbing him of that age

which is both more necessary and more honourable than any other; that more advanced age, I mean, during which also as a teacher he excelled all others.

How could he have had disciples, if he did not teach? And how could he have taught, unless he had reached the age of a Master? For when he came to be baptized, he had not yet completed his thirtieth year, but was beginning to be about thirty years of age.

Now, that the first stage of early life embraces thirty years, and that this extends onwards to the fortieth year, every one will admit; but from the fortieth and fiftieth year a man begins to decline towards old age, which our Lord possessed while he still fulfilled the office of a Teacher.¹⁰⁷

Now this is a very interesting account of Jesus' ministry. Irenaeus, who was born barely fifty years after these events, is saying that the orthodox age for Jesus at his death is wrong. Jesus could not teach until he was a Master (Mason), a position that can only be reached when he was more than 30 years old, and to say that he died at this

age robs him of his whole teaching career. In fact, according to Irenaeus, Jesus actually achieved an age of greater than fifty years. Irenaeus is quite animated about this, because he says that the early date for his death robs Jesus of his position of Master. While such a scenario may seem fanciful, in the light of classical Church doctrine, the gospels actually support this claim for a greater age for Jesus. In the Gospel of John it is said that:

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, You are not yet fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham?[B108](#)

If Jesus had only been 31 or 32 years old at this time, then surely the jibe would have been 'You are not yet forty years old'. To say 'fifty' would imply that Jesus was already in his late

forties at this time – and he most probably was.

As we have seen, Irenaeus indicates that Jesus lived until he was more than fifty years old, or a date that must be later than AD 56, according to his classical birth date. But how far can we take this? What is the upper limit of the age of Jesus when he died? In the very same paragraph of *Against Heresies* that has just been quoted, Irenaeus gives us another clue:

Even as the Gospel and all the elders testify; those who were conversant in Asia with John, the disciple of the Lord, [affirming] that John conveyed to them that information. And He (Jesus) remained among them up to the times of Trajan.¹⁰⁹

This quote is even more interesting, for it would appear that Irenaeus believed that Jesus was still alive in the times of Trajan, who did not become emperor

until AD 98. Some have claimed that this sentence refers to John and not Jesus, but the whole point of this paragraph from *Against Heresies* was to show the great age of Jesus, not John. Thus it is quite certain that Irenaeus believed that Jesus lived to a great age, and the reference to a death in the reign of Trajan must therefore pertain to Jesus. This would mean that he was at least 92 years old at the time of his death. This rather scuppers the biblical assertion that Jesus died in AD 33, but it dovetails nicely with Josephus' and the Talmud's accounts (which will be explored later) of Jesus being taken down from the cross after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, needing medical attention and surviving. If Jesus survived until the reign of Trajan, then he went on to live for another 28 years.

However, if Jesus was born in AD 6, as seems most likely from the varying gospel accounts of his birth, then Jesus would have to have been 92 years of age when he died. This is quite an advanced age for this era, so is it possible that he could have lived this long?

The alternative scenario is that the early parts of Jesus' life, including his birth, actually pertain to John the Baptist. As we have seen, the AD 33 crucifixion date actually belongs to John, not Jesus, so why not hand that endearing birth scene over to John too? In reality, was it John the Baptist lying in the manger surrounded by cute animals? Strange as it may seem, Irenaeus agrees with this proposition too, for he says that Jesus was born much later:

... for our Lord was born about the forty-first year of the reign of Augustus.¹¹²

This is a confident assertion, and the date of Octavian-Augustus' reign should have been well known in Irenaeus' era. However, Augustus did not become emperor until 27 BC. If Jesus was born 41 years after this time, then he was born in AD 14, not AD 6 (AD 14 being the year that Augustus died). This allows Jesus a much more reasonable age upon his deathbed, for if he did indeed live until the reign of Trajan, he would now have only been 84 years old at that time. This may be old, but it is not an unreasonable life span for a well-fed royal of that era.

This new birth date would also allow for a later date for the discussion with Jesus' detractors in the verse from John, as just quoted. The dissenters said he was 'not yet fifty';

so let's say he was 48 at this time, just for the sake of argument. This new birth-date would mean that this discussion took place in AD 62, just two years before Jesus became the High Priest of Jerusalem, and in the precise decade when all of these events were taking place. This new birth-date looks decidedly promising.

This new information and new chronology also raises the question as to which text Irenaeus was referring to. The information about Jesus being alive in the era of Trajan supposedly came from a gospel, and also from Church elders' teachings, so to which gospel does he refer? This assertion of a great age for Jesus has most certainly not been extracted from the gospels as we know them today, and so there are only two possible explanations: either our current gospels have been

radically altered to suit this new AD 33 crucifixion date, or there was another gospel that has been eliminated from the Church canon. Again it would appear that this self-serving institution is solely concerned with its own survival rather than the truth.

If the latter was the case, then what we have here is tentative evidence for a radically different gospel that focused on the historical truth of these events, probably written by someone who knew these events well and may have even been involved in them. The cautious suggestion has to be, therefore, that this was the Gospel of Justus of Tiberias – Saul-Josephus' acquaintance and fellow historian who became his most vocal critic. Justus wrote an entire history of the Jewish people, that ranged from the era of Moses through to the death of Agrippa

II in about AD 100, and it also detailed the events of the Jewish War. If anyone was in a position to write a contrary gospel that indicated that Jesus was still alive in the 80s and 90s, it was Justus of Tiberias. But who was this Justus?

The history and identity of Justus of Tiberias will be discussed at length in a later chapter, so I do not propose to cover any of this material now. However, it will be demonstrated that there are numerous links and similarities between Justus and Jesus. So, the interesting possibility exists that Irenaeus of Lyon had in his possession a copy of the Gospel of Jesus.

There has been a lot of talk recently about Berenger Sauniere, the small-town cleric of Rennes-le-Chateau, a rural village that nestles up

against the foothills of the Pyrenees in southern France. It is said that during renovations of his church, Sauniere discovered some documents that he took to a priest called Abbe Bieil and his colleague Emille Hoffet. Subsequent to this, Sauniere became oddly wealthy, and so the rumour spread that the documents he discovered were valuable. The peculiarly coded manuscripts that have been shown in regard to this mystery do not appear to be valuable or significant in any conceivable way, but a copy of the gospel according to Justus of Tiberias would fit this bill very nicely.

Abgarus

Further confirmation of this mature age for Jesus can be found in a

complicated piece of history and correspondence originating in Edessa in northern Syria. Saul-Josephus, in Book 20 of his *Antiquities*, gives us a tale about the conversion to Judaism of Queen Helena of Adiabene: the Queen of the Osrhoeans. The Osrhoeans refers to the Assyrians, for Adiabene was supposedly a province on the river Tigris in Parthia. However, bear in mind that both Osrhoea and Adiabene might be pseudonyms for Parthia (Persia), in which case, Helena of Adiabene might have the same background and pedigree as Queen Thea Muse Ourania of Parthia.

Anyway, Eusebius, in his *History of the Church*, tells a similar tale of King Abgarus (Agbarus), who is also designated as a King of the Osrhoeans (Assyrians); but the king is afflicted with leprosy and writes to

Jesus and asks for a cure. On being cured, he too converts to Judaism, just as Queen Helena did.

So when did these events take place? The agent of this conversion was one Ananias, who Professor Robert Eisenman identifies with the Ananias who met Saul-Josephus in 'Damascus', in Acts 9:12. He does so because of the later mention in Acts of a 'prophet' called Agabus, who can be equated with King Agbarus, who prophesies a great famine during the reign of Emperor Claudius. Similarly, the accounts of Saul-Josephus say that the newly converted Queen Helena was grieved by the plight of the Jews during this same famine, and sent money to Egypt for the purchase of grain. She then converted to Judaism, along with many of her subjects, and built a palace in the city of Jerusalem.

The considered opinion of scholars is that this famine, that occurred during the reign of Claudius, equates with known famines across the Eastern Roman Empire during the years AD 47 to 48. However, it should be noted that Eusebius, the father of Church history, was claiming that King Agbarus (Agabus) wrote to Jesus and received a reply, letters that are preserved in Eusebius' *The History of the Church* and in the apocryphal gospel of Thaddaeus. In other words, by the admission of Eusebius himself, Jesus was alive and well in AD 48.

The evidence is mounting and consistent. The story that we have been sold by the Christian priesthood is a complete and utter lie, both in its chronology and in its social context. Contrary to Church misinformation, Jesus was an important figure in Syrio-

Judaea who became both king and high priest, but he did so during the AD 60s and not the AD 30s. This fact will allow us, in later chapters, to experience a whole new vista of Jesus' life, much of which was spent in exile in England.

Summary

Paul-Josephus' publisher, Epaphroditus, was secretary to Nero and was responsible for his death.

Josephus Flavius appears to indicate that Jesus became High Priest of Jerusalem.

Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews in the New Testament, confirms that Jesus became High Priest of Jerusalem.

However, Josephus' account specifically mentions that this occurred in AD 64, and so Jesus was alive in this late era.

Saul-Josephus and his brother Matthias were later contenders for the high priesthood, but Saul-Josephus was rejected.

his rejection may be why Saul-Josephus later turned and fought for the Romans.

here are a great number of equivalences between the works of Josephus and Saul that demonstrate that this was the same person (Saul-Josephus).

Josephus gives an alternative account of the crucifixion. This new information suggests that Jesus was crucified in the Kidron Valley, but was taken down early and survived.

bishop Irenaeus says that Jesus was born

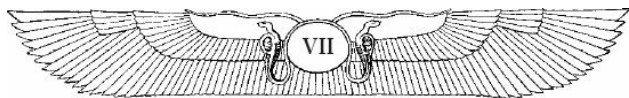
in AD 14 and died in about AD 101, dates that are unorthodox but which are in total agreement with a crucifixion in AD 70.

*1 The Loeb library edition of Josephus Flavius says that Saul-Josephus lived beyond AD 100, based upon a single report by Photius that Agrippa died in AD 100. This view is not widely supported among other historians. It may be, however, that Saul-Josephus absconded to England at this time (as Josephus of Arimathea), to avoid an untimely demise.

*2 But it was not a taboo of traditional Judaism, as Lot, Abraham, King David and King Solomon all had relationships with sisters, daughters or mothers. Nor was it taboo in Egypt, where all the pharaohs, especially the Ptolemies, indulged in a little incest. See the books *Jesus* and *Solomon* for further details.

*3 The reference to John the Baptist in Josephus' *Antiquities* is not necessarily a complete fabrication

in the same manner of the interpolated paragraphs on the biblical Jesus are – the Baptist's paragraphs are much more reasoned and believable. However, it has to be said that if they were deleted from the text, the chapter would actually scan more fluently. The section starts with a description of Emperor Tiberius giving orders to Vitellius to march on King Aretas, breaks off to relate the death of John the Baptist, and goes back to Vitellius' preparations for war. If the paragraphs on John the Baptist were removed, readers would never know.



Disciple Tax Collectors

It is not just the true date for the ministry of Jesus that appears to be out of step with orthodox opinion, but so too are both his politics and his true aims and ambitions. The following parable is supposed to have been delivered direct from the mouth of Jesus himself. It is a curious scene where a landlord – Jesus likes tales justifying the actions of landlords – sets up a vineyard and rents it out to a tenant farmer. On requesting and sending for his rent, the landlord's

messengers and son are killed, and the parable then prepares the listener for the summary justice and death of the troublesome tenant farmer.

Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, who planted a vineyard and let it out to a farmer, and went into a far country. And when the time of the fruit drew near, the landlord sent his servants to the farmer, that they might receive the (rent).

And the farmer took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, the landlord sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise (and killed them). But last of all the landlord sent unto them his son, saying, They will respect my son. But when the farmer saw the son, they said among themselves ... come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught the son and slew him.

When the landlord therefore of the vineyard comes, what will he do unto those farmers? The audience said unto (Jesus), He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other farmers, which shall render him the fruits (the rent) in

their seasons.^{B1}

This, then, is a parable about an absentee landlord's legitimate right to rule, demand rents, and deliver summary justice on a tenant farmer if he does not deliver the cash. This is not subject that one would immediately have thought to have been a concern for the 'man-of-the-people' Jesus that is usually portrayed to us by the clergy. But, of course, that humble image is completely wrong. As has been pointed out already, Jesus was of royal blood and therefore most probably an absentee landlord himself.

The reason for highlighting this parable is, of course, that it has a direct parallel in Josephus' *Life*. In Saul-Josephus' version, this story becomes real history and it refers to one Philip of Gamala, one of the Babylonian Jews from the city of

Gamala and the province of Bethanya, who was apparently a governor under King Agrippa II. But these are the very same people who I have already closely identified with the biblical family, and so this story from *Life* is central to the biblical story. That is why a sanitised version of this account appears as a parable in the Gospel of Matthew, the parable we have just read about the absentee landlord.

Josephus' historical account of these events relates the story of Varus, a descendant of King Sohaemus of Emesa, who was given temporary governorship under King Agrippa II, while Philip of Gamala was away in Jerusalem and the king himself was in Berytus (Beirut). Josephus says of this event:

Philip, the son of Jacimus, who was their governor under king Agrippa, had been

unexpectedly saved when the royal palace at Jerusalem had been besieged ... Philip (eventually) fled to one of the villages belonging to him that was situated near the city of Gamala.

He wrote to King Agrippa and Berenice, and (sent the letter with) one of his freedmen to carry them to Varus, who at this time was procurator of the kingdom, while (the king and queen) were gone to Berytus (Beirut). When Varus had received these letters from Philip, and had learned Philip was still alive, he was very uneasy at it, supposing that he should appear useless (not needed) to the king ... He therefore produced the carrier of the letters before the people, and accused him of forging the same ... so he killed him.

And when this freedman of Philip did not return, Philip was uncertain why he had been delayed, and sent a second messenger with letters ... Varus accused this messenger also, when he came, of telling a falsehood, and killed him too. For (Varus) ... had great expectations ... that he should himself take the government, as derived from their kings; for Varus was ... a descendant of King Sohaemus ... He had a mind also to join with the Trachonites in (Bethanya), and to take up arms and make an assault upon the Babylonian Jews that were at (Gamala and

Bethanya).

Varus therefore summoned twelve of the most esteemed Jews and instructed them to proceed to (Bethanya) to tell their compatriots ... (the Babylonian Jews at Gamala) to send seventy of their principal men to answer the charges that had been laid against them ... The Bethanians, with no suspicion of the fate in store for them, sent off the seventy, and they travelled with the twelve eminent Jews down to Caesarea ... Varus met them with the king's forces, and killed them all (except one) ... and made an expedition against the Jews of Gamala in (Bethanya).^{J2}

This is a long passage that has a few difficult elements in it, but it is worth rereading both of these quotations, from the New Testament and Josephus' *Life*, as there is a wealth of information and explanation to be found there.

Note how the two extracts are almost identical in their commentary and meaning. Jesus' parable is about a

tenant farmer who was left in charge of a farm, whereas Josephus records a governor (Varus) who was taking up a temporary position while the real governor (Philip) was away in Jerusalem. In each case, the real owner or administrator of the lands (the absentee landlord, or Philip) sends messengers back to the man who is temporarily in charge (the tenant farmer, or Varus). But on each occasion the tenant or temporary governor kills the messengers. In the final case, the messenger who was sent was actually the landlord's son, whereas Philip sent seventy principal men. If we continue the equivalence, this might suggest that a son of Philip was among the seventy principal men killed by Varus on the last occasion.

So what is the gospel story in Matthew trying to relate, and why is it

there in the first place? And how does all of this real history relate to Jesus and his disciples? The answer lies in the true identity of Jesus. We have already identified Jesus as being Jesus of Gamala and it is to this very same Jesus of Gamala and to his close relation Philip of Gamala (the son of James), that these particular paragraphs relate. That is why the biblical Jesus is portrayed as personally giving this parable. This was not a simple parable about landlords being able to demand taxes from tenant farmers on distant landholdings, nor was it a historical account of some local difficulties in Gamala – it was a record of political events that involved Jesus' own family. That this parable was included in the New Testament may well suggest that parts of the gospels were actually

taken from texts written by Jesus' close family; perhaps this was even taken from the Gospel of Justus of Tiberias, and there will be further evidence for this suggestion shortly.

Since this story in Josephus' *Life* is actually biblical, relating to the family of Jesus, it is highly likely that the twelve leading men and the seventy emissaries mentioned in this passage were the same twelve disciples and seventy emissaries that the biblical Jesus deployed in the Gospel of Luke:

Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.[B3](#)

After this, Jesus appointed seventy others[*1](#), and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to come.[B4](#)

In Josephus' version of events, Varus' summons for twelve eminent Jews and then a further seventy emissaries was delivered to the 'Babylonian Jews'; and this is a standard reference to the Galilean Sect in Gamala, the home of Jesus of Gamala. But if Jesus of Gamala was the biblical Jesus, as we now know, then this same instruction was actually delivered to the biblical Jesus. This is why the Gospel of Luke says that Jesus sent out twelve disciples and then appointed a further seventy emissaries, and sent them out too. This is simply two accounts of the same historical event.

Note, however, that we have already closely linked Saul-Josephus with the Gospel of Luke, and here we find that the mention of the 'seventy emissaries' only occurs in the Gospel of Luke and in Josephus' *Life*. Again

we see evidence of Saul-Josephus' fingerprints all over the Gospel of Luke, which demonstrates how closely involved he was in the production of the New Testament.

The only difference between these two texts is that Josephus says that the seventy emissaries were all killed (bar one), while the Gospel of Luke says that they all returned triumphant. One suspects, however, that the truth lies somewhere in the middle of these two reports. Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus) is said to have sent out his twelve disciples with a further seventy 'eminent men'. With Jesus' faction being a revolutionary and martial community, with many armed warriors, I have no doubt that these 'eminent men' also included among their number a large number of heavily armed knightly figures on

horseback.

The classical imagery of all seventy missionaries being pious monks with a rustic staff and a tattered habit (robe) is far too simplistic. Varus would have been dealing with a diplomatic mission from Jesus that was more than capable of defending itself, even if a surprise attack was mounted. No doubt one or two of Jesus' emissaries were killed or wounded, but they would have given Varus' forces an equally bloody nose and indeed returned home 'triumphant'.

Note, however, how the real political, factional and martial history of Syrio-Judaea has been transformed, in the gospel accounts, into a fairytale account of simple folk and their good deeds – seventy pious monks in battered habits. In reality, this is an account about a heroic rebel leader of

a sizeable army, who sends out a diplomatic mission to seek a dialogue with the king's recently appointed deputy. But the duplicitous deputy has a political agenda of his own and seeks to destroy those seventy emissaries in a pitched battle; and so the survivors of this mission return home, bruised and bloodied and yet victorious, having beaten off Varus' treacherous attack. Yet the biblical account of these events is as divorced from the historical reality as it could possibly be. Only the bare bones of the original history remain, while the flesh has been replaced with a fairy-tale of the trials and tribulations of being a tenant farmer who owes taxes.

However, the bones of the original history are still there, and therefore whoever wrote the Gospel of Luke must have known about the real

historical events that lay behind it. It looks as though this parable was being used to justify, to those who could understand the real history, the real reason for the exile of Varus. We are not entirely sure who Varus was, however there are three mentions of him in the works of Josephus, where he is variously called Varus or Noarus.⁵ The events related in these different sections of Josephus' works are identical, so this must be the same man, and the confusion in his name would suggest that this is not a real name. However, whatever his true name and ancestry, it would appear that Varus' royal connections to the House of Emesa were strong enough for him to be considered a possible ruler of Syrio-Israel, and so his removal from office and from the royal succession needed some explanation.

The parables and stories in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke were a part of that explanation process; they are simply arguing that the temporary governor (Varus) had overstepped his position and, like the evil tenant farmer, he even deserved to die. The common people listening to the parable readily agreed with Jesus that the farmer should die, so they could hardly complain subsequently if Varus was done away with. But, under pressure from King Sohaemus of Emesa, his death was commuted to exile, and this leniency would suggest that Varus was possibly even a son of Sohaemus.

Thus, as has been demonstrated many times before, these parables about poor farming folk were deliberately constructed in order that they could be interpreted on many levels. The ignorant, common people

may have enjoyed the outer level of this story, but the biblical Jesus was not a poor carpenter delivering stories about absentee landlords and farmers, he was a prince and king, who was on a political mission to take over Judaea as a stepping-stone to the rule of the entire Empire. It is on this central, historical level that these parables should be really be interpreted.

If we use our eyes to see and our ears to hear, as Jesus liked to say, it becomes quite obvious that this whole 'tenant farming' issue boils down to taxes and tax farming, not vineyards and agricultural farmers. This is how the taxation system was described and organised in this early era, for it was simply another form of 'farming'. Various 'farmers' were authorised by the state to 'farm' taxes in a particular region, and then hand over a

proportion of those taxes to the state. In the biblical account the tax region has become a farm, the *publicanus* or tax-collector has become a farmer, while the authorities or government have become the absentee landlord.

In this case, the story actually refers to a local *publicanus* or tax-collector (Varus) who was refusing to hand over the taxes he had collected in his region (or wanted to send them to Jerusalem rather than Gamala). The authorities (Philip of Gamala and Jesus of Gamala) sent messengers asking for the taxes that Varus had collected, but the messengers were killed. Finally a large deputation of seventy assorted officials and army personnel were sent to Varus – a deputation that may have included a relative of Philip or Jesus – which resulted in a pitched battle. From Josephus Flavius' account of

these events, the request for taxes was unsuccessful, but from the biblical perspective it was triumphant. The biblical Jesus had got his taxes from the people, an uncomfortable reality which may seem deeply out of character considering his orthodox persona, but this is why Jesus was often accused of meeting with 'tax-collectors and sinners'.

The historical translation of this biblical story simply confirms that Jesus and Philip were the authorities or government in charge of taxation in parts of Syrio-Jordan; and this is what the whole dispute that caused the Jewish War was all about. As we shall see again later, the lands of Bethany and Aurania, which had been granted to the exiled Babylonian Jews, were promised 'tax-free'. Well, no land is truly 'tax-free', but what this did mean

is that Jesus of Gamala could levy and collect his own taxes, rather than being subservient to Jerusalem, King Agrippa, the Syrian governor or Rome. Varus, however, had different ideas about this, which is where this particular dispute originated. Thus the seventy pious ‘Christian missionaries’ that Jesus sent out in Luke 10:1 were actually armed thugs and tax-collectors. Ouch! That is a bit of a painful reversal of Christian doctrine.

Finally, note again that the historical version of these events took place in the AD 60s, and so once again we see that Jesus was alive and well in this late era.

Epistles

It should also be pointed out that there is another long and complex parable in

the Gospel of Matthew about a royal marriage that the nobles of the land refused to come to. In a similar fashion to the parable that has just been discussed, this parable about a 'contentious marriage' again comes straight out of the texts of Josephus Flavius, and this time it refers to Queen Thea Musa Ourania herself. However, since this particular parable does not relate so closely to the subject at hand, I refer readers to the book *Cleopatra* for further details.

But it must be quite apparent by now that there are a large number of individual verses and several large sections within the New Testament texts that have been directly copied from the works of Josephus Flavius. I make this assertion this way around, with Saul-Josephus being the originator of these stories, for his

versions are far more detailed and seemingly historical. The equivalent stories within the New Testament are merely synopses that are written covertly, in the form of parables, so that the true subject matter is deeply hidden. The reason for this obfuscation is that the biblical author(s) did not want their spiritual story tainted with any real history that would make Jesus appear mortal, let alone a military commander, civil leader, high priest, royal prince and king. This again suggests that Saul-Josephus was the original composer of these gospels, for it was Saul-Josephus who desired to spread an image of the biblical family being pious paupers, rather than influential monarchs.

However, it has to be said that the new chronology being forged in this book does appear to be

contradicted by some of the accounts of the crucifixion in the epistles – the letters that Saul wrote to his congregations in and around the Mediterranean. Just to quickly recap, this new, revised chronology indicates that the majority of the epistles were written in the 50s and 60s AD, while Jesus was not crucified until AD 70. How, then, can these letters refer to a crucifixion that had not yet taken place?

Perhaps we should firstly look at the possible dates for these epistles or letters. None of the New Testament letters are explicitly dated, but from their content and the people mentioned it is possible to work out rough dates for most of them. The following table gives the classical dates for those letters that can be dated. However, these dates are regularly disputed and

debated in academic circles and so I have also included a set of more modern dates and my own recent assessment, based upon the new chronology:

Epistle	Classic	Modern
Romans	55-56	55-59
1 Corinthians	54-55	55+
2 Corinthians	55-56	55+
Galatians	48	52-62
Ephesians	61	prior
Philippians	62	54-62
Colossians	61	54-90
1 Thessalonians	51	52
2 Thessalonians	51	75-90
1 Timothy	62	100-150
2 Timothy	64	100-150
Titus	63	100-

Titus	63	150
Philemon	61	59-62

Note that the new chronology being forged in this book does not significantly alter the dates of Saul's travels and therefore the dates of his epistles. Note also that the majority of his epistles were written while he was under house arrest in Rome, prior to his journey back to Judaea where he became the Judaeian army commander in charge of Galilee. So how can letters written in this early era refer to a crucifixion in AD 70? One possibility is that some of these epistles actually referred to the death of John the Baptist in AD 33, rather than Jesus in AD 70, and they have been modified at a later date to occasionally append the name of Jesus. However, it would seem

Herod Antipas under Judaic law, and therefore would not have been crucified. Thus, in this scenario, the mention of a crucifixion would have to be yet another addition or alteration to these texts.

Alternatively, the letters that mention the crucifixion may have been later forgeries that were not penned by Saul – the uncertain epistles. There are a number of these epistles or letters that are suspect and it is generally considered that the genuine ones include Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon, as detailed in the table above. However, the letters that mention the crucifixion and resurrection include Romans, Corinthians and Galatians, which are all considered to be genuine. So how, then, do these epistles from the AD 50s

and 60s mention Jesus' death?

Well, the surprising deflection of that argument is that the epistles don't mention Jesus' death, or at least not in the fashion that Christians might expect. According to the standard biblical chronology, Jesus was crucified just 20 years before the first of the epistles were written, and Jesus was, of course, the great hero of this new Simple Judaic sect. And yet none of Saul's letters detail the greatest and most pivotal event in the life of Jesus - the crucifixion. Yes, there are a couple of glancing references here and there, as will be explored later, but there are no dramatic descriptions or even brief synopses of the primary events in Jesus' ministry - the Mount of Olives arrest, the trial before Pontius Pilate, the scourging, the crucifixion, the resurrection, or even the famous scene

resurrection, or even the famous scene at the empty tomb. There may be the odd reference to a crucifixion here and there in the epistles, but no descriptions whatsoever.

And what of Mary and Martha, or Lazarus and the house of Simon at Bethany, and the anointing of Jesus - the very event that conferred the title of Christ (King) upon him? Why did Saul not mention any of this to his prospective and eager followers in Corinth, Philippi or Ephesus? Was Jesus' arrest on the Mount of Olives or the discovery of the empty tomb, irrelevant to Saul's teachings? Were Mary and Martha or Mary the Virgin inconsequential to the life of the great hero of Saul's new creed? Peculiar, isn't it?

So what has happened here? Did Saul simply ignore these momentous

he considered them to be unimportant? Of course not. The real problem for Saul, on his many travels across the Mediterranean, is that none of this had actually happened yet - all of this great history actually lay in the future and so it was impossible for Saul to mention any of it. The only way any of this could be included in these epistles was by subsequent interpolation. But since the epistles were already well known in the late 1st century any later interpolations had to be subtle and unobtrusive, as we shall see.

It would be foolish in the extreme to think that any of the New Testament texts have survived unaltered, and the epistles are no exception. There was too much at stake here to allow Sauline epistles to survive that studiously failed to mention the crucifixion, and so they

appear to have been dutifully amended – just as one of Josephus Flavius’ books was similarly amended with the *Testimonium Flavium*, to mention a ‘Jesus Christ’. Evidence for this tampering is apparent in the paltry number of these ‘crucifixion verses’, the paucity of their information, and the suspicious form that they take. The crucifixion was the primary event for Simple Judaism, the very foundation-stone upon which the doctrine of ‘faith’ was conceived; and yet all we see are a few comments in passing about a crucifixion and resurrection somehow associated with a Christ or a Jesus Christ. So how has this situation arisen?

The answer to this may be manifold. Firstly, the many references to a ‘Christ’ in the epistles may well have originally referred to John the

have originally referred to John the Baptist. It is odd that John is never mentioned once in the epistles, despite his apparent fame and dramatic death, but if John had also been a christ (a king) then he may have had a central role in the teachings of Saul. Secondly, there may well have been a number of later interpolations into these texts, for some of the references to a crucifixion are suspiciously tacked onto the end of verses and paragraphs, as apparent afterthoughts. Thirdly, there may also have been an element misinterpretation here, for not every crucifixion ends in death. For example, if a football manager says that his team had been crucified during their last match, we don't necessarily expect to see eleven crosses erected on the pitch. Fourthly, the fact that every master Mason in a modern Lodge has 'died' and been

crime has been committed, nor that any physical miracle has occurred. And so we have yet another potential source of misinterpretation, and the occasional mention of Jesus' resurrection may have been a reference to a similar form of Gnostic initiation. An example of this misunderstanding can be seen in 1Cor15:4, where Jesus is said to have died and was buried and yet rose again on the third day. This is exactly the same as the descriptions for the death and burial of Lazarus and it merely details Jesus' Masonic Third Degree initiation, which would have happened in the mid AD 30s, depending on Jesus' exact birth date.

When taken together, these many misinterpretations, mistranslations and interpolations appear to account for each and every one of the dozen or so references to a crucifixion or

resurrection within the epistles of Saul. Perhaps a few examples of what I mean may illustrate the problem. I have researched this book by cross-referencing about sixteen English versions of the Bible, and have never ceased to be amazed at the number of variations in the English translations that have been presented to us. The worst Bibles tend to be the more modern translations, as these desperately try to make sense of verses that are often very complex and sometimes utterly baffling. However, to make sense of these verses the translators inevitably bend the text to make it fit the orthodox view of the story, whatever that might be. They also try to make a translation in a modern context, seemingly without understanding the history or society of the region.

the region.

The following three versions of Galatians 3:1 admirably demonstrate some of this suspect translating:

O inconsiderate Galatians! who has deceived you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ crucified was evidently represented among you?
(Living Oracles Bible)

O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? **(Revised Standard Bible)**

Foolish Galatians! Who has been fascinating you - you before whose very eyes Jesus Christ was depicted upon the cross?
(Twentieth Century Bible)

In explanation, the Jews had been telling the Galatians that the spirit of god was to be found in the Law (the Torah), but Saul (Josephus) scolds them for this and says that the spirit of god was to be found in faith (in the

(of Moses). Thus the import of these verses appears to be clear: the Galatians had been shown the crucified Jesus and should believe in that, and disregard the faithless Jews (the circumcised). However, that is not exactly what Saul-Josephus meant at this time. Instead, he intended:

... those who ... foresaw that God would pronounce the Gentiles righteous as the result of faith, foretold the Good News to Abraham with the words, 'Through thee all the Gentiles shall be blessed.'^{*2} ... therefore, those whose lives are based on faith share the blessings bestowed upon the faith of Abraham.^{B6}

So the faith that Saul-Josephus was alluding to was often a faith in Abraham, and not simply a faith in Jesus, and so Jesus does not need to have been crucified at this time for Saul-Josephus to have been preaching 'faith' in his early epistles. It is

possible, therefore, that reference here to a crucifixion may be a later addition to this verse, and we can see evidence for this in the following versions. These examples of the same verse are taken from more venerable editions of the Bible, whose translators tried to stick to the original text, even if it did not make a great deal of sense:

O thoughtless Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you?
(Wesley Bible)

O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you? **(King James Bible)**

As readers can now appreciate, much of what we read in the English Bible is actually the personal whim or opinion of the translator, and there are many

of the translator, and there are many differing opinions to be found, and so each and every verse we read may actually have a different meaning to the one traditionally ascribed. For clarification, perhaps we should look at the original Greek and Latin; for there is a wealth of possibilities to be found which may well demonstrate that even the more venerable Bibles have got their translations completely wrong. The verses below are from the Greek Tischendorf and the Latin Vulgate. *3

ω ανοητοι γαλαται τις υμας εβασκανεν οισ
κατ οφθαλμονς ιησους χριστος προεγραφη
εσταυρωμενος

o insensati Galatae quis vos fascinavit ante
quorum oculos Iesus Christus proscriptus est
crucifixus

Remember that the Latin Vulgate is a

been modified to suit the gospel story, and so it is the Greek that is the most original here. So, in the most literal of translations from the Greek, this verse might read something like:

Oh foolish Galatians, who has charmed you by that eye that King Jesus wrote about – crucified? (my hyphen)

The verse still does not make much sense, and in order to make some kind of progress we need to know the cultural and social context in which it was written. The clue here is the word *ebaskanen* ἐβασκανεν or *fascinavit* which actually refers to someone being charmed by the ‘evil eye’. The Latin word *fascinavit* is also the basis for the English word ‘fascinate’, which again literally means ‘cast a spell’.

The evidence for this being the correct interpretation is contained in

the next pertinent word, which is *ophthalmos* οφθαλμος or *oculos*, which obviously refers to an eye. Therefore, it is entirely possible that the ‘bewitching’ or ‘charming’ was due to the eye itself – the evil eye. There was a lot more folk mysticism within ancient Judaism and Christianity than most theologians would care to admit, and here the verse is quite possibly speaking of the evil eye; and yet not one of the Bibles or Concordances I have checked mentions this possibility.





Fig 7.1 The Hand of Fatima, with the disk of the evil eye.

A modern blue and white eye pendant for warding off the evil eye.

The evil eye was an envious glance that may, unintentionally or otherwise, steal your good fortune. It is also referred to in Math 6:23 where it is called a *poneros ophthalmos* πονηρος οφθαλμος and is again condemned as being a manifestation of darkness and evil. Those with green eyes were seen

cone manufacturer, for obvious reasons (but does ice cream ward off evil?). However, the most common talisman fought fire with fire and was an image of the evil eye itself – normally a dark blue pupil with a light blue iris. An interesting development of this can be seen on the entrance to the Tomb of the Three Brothers in Palmyra, Syria, where the evil eyes that ward off evil spirits have daggers thrust through their pupils. The city of Palmyra will become important in later chapters.

Nowadays we are supposed to inhabit an era of enlightenment and rationality, and yet many cultures, from Judaism to Islam, still respect the malignant



Fig 7.2 The Egyptian Eye of Horus.

power of the evil eye. This is why the symbol of the evil eye can still be seen in every aspect of life, from the domestic to the corporate, across great swathes of the Mediterranean nations. Until recently, no Greek boat or ship would ever set sail without a protective eye on its prow, while businesses and shops across Turkey and Syria often display a protective blue eye. Even in the fundamentalist Islamic world, a cult that so abhors icons, the Hamsa or Hand of Fatima,^{*4} with the protective eye on its palm, is still a ubiquitous symbol for warding off evil.

The true origins for the evil eye, like much of Western theology, lie in Egypt. The Hand of Fatima can often be seen hanging downwards, looking like the flower of a bluebell; however, early Islamic depictions always had

eye on its palm, is still a ubiquitous symbol for warding off evil.

The true origins for the evil eye, like much of Western theology, lie in Egypt. The Hand of Fatima can often be seen hanging downwards, looking like the flower of a bluebell; however, early Islamic depictions always had the hand upright, like a policeman commanding 'stop'. In this upright, stylized form the hand can actually be seen to be the capital of an 'open lotus' pillar, the same design that can be seen on many Egyptian temples. The eye that is superimposed upon this pillar is the eye of Horus, sometimes known as the *wadjyt* eye. Thus the antidote to the evil eye is a simple reproduction of one of the ubiquitous symbols and talismans of Egypt, with the most popular charms throughout Egyptian history being the *djed* pillar and the

Further links between the evil eye and Judaeo-Christianity can be seen in the Judaic name for the Hand of Fatima, which is the Hand of Miriam (Hand of Mary), the sister of Moses. However, the common name for the evil eye in Turkish, Arabic and Urdu, is the *nazar*, and this name is likely to have been derived from the Nazarene Sect, which is one of the alternative names for the Galilean Sect. In fact, since Mary Magdalene was a Nazarene herself, as we shall see later, the Hand of Mary most probably referred to her.

Having looked at the background to the evil eye, what, then, was the true meaning of this verse from Galatians? An alternative translation, taking into account the cultural and social mysticism of the day, might be:

Oh foolish Galatians, who has charmed you with the evil eye that King Jesus has

previously written about – crucified? (my hyphen)

The sentence is now beginning to make sense. But that reference to a crucifixion looks as though it has been tacked on as a complete afterthought, most probably by a much later copyist who had no idea what the original verse meant. Alternatively, *estauromenos* ἐστανρωμενος can sometimes refer to ‘destroying the body or its powers’, rather than a simple crucifixion. This alternative translation would make a deal of sense, because ‘giving someone the evil eye’ did indeed destroy their powers, and that is why they were afraid of it.

In addition to this, since *proscriptus* can also refer to banning or outlawing something, instead of simply writing about it - just as

translation would make a deal of sense, because 'giving someone the evil eye' did indeed destroy their powers, and that is why they were afraid of it.

In addition to this, since *proscriptus* can also refer to banning or outlawing something, instead of simply writing about it - just as 'proscribe' does in the English - the 'giving someone the evil eye' may simply have been outlawed. In which case the original meaning of this verse may well have been:

Oh foolish Galatians, who has charmed you with the evil eye? King Jesus has already banned this destructive force.

The verse now makes a great deal more sense, as can be seen, but this does put a rather different spin on its meaning. Here we see that Jesus had

body'. That this alternative translation was often intended is again made clear in another verse from Galatians (5:24):

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

οι δε του χριστου την σαρκα εσταυρωσαν
συν τοις παθημασιν και ταις επιθυμiais

The whole point of the verses immediately prior to this one, is to highlight the evil 'works of the flesh' which are named as being: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lustfulness, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, fighting, jealousies, angers, rivalries, divisions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness and revellings. But if this verse is to continue in this same refrain, then why do we have a reference the crucifixion of Christ?

The answer is surely that *christ* also means 'anointed' or 'anointing the

body'. In the first century AD, oiling the body with spices and perfumes was considered to be the custom of the courtesan and the prostitute, and so this verse is surely a simple continuation of these 'works of the flesh'. So, the reference here to 'Christ' is a mistranslation and this should be amended to 'anointed'.

Likewise, the reference to a crucifixion here is quite obviously not of a real crucifixion, it is simply another reference to bodily self-destruction. In which case, this verse should read:

And they that have anointed their bodies with oils and spices have destroyed themselves with passions and lusts.

Once again, the verse suddenly begins to make sense, and once again we see that there was no mention of a

another reference to bodily self-destruction. In which case, this verse should read:

And they that have anointed their bodies with oils and spices have destroyed themselves with passions and lusts.

Once again, the verse suddenly begins to make sense, and once again we see that there was no mention of a crucifixion within these letters of Saul. And so when we come to a verse that says something like:

For though he (Jesus) was crucified through weakness, yet he lives by the power of God.[B7](#)

We can immediately tell that this refers to the body, the self, rather than to a cross made of wood. This verse should actually be read as:

may have indulged himself on the odd occasion, but he was still a pious individual who lived by Mosaic law and honoured god (honest!).

There is one other form of mistranslation which affects these references to crucifixions, and that is the confusion between a crucifixion and a small piece of wood. Take a look at this verse, for instance:

Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul (Saul)?^{B9}

μεμερισται ο χριστον μη παυλον εσταυρωθη
υπερ υμων η εις το ονομα παυλου
εβαπτισθητε

Which translates literally as:

Divide this anointed one not paul crucify for yourselves, or to this name Paul (Saul) baptise.

The whole point of the verses prior to this are the many divisions that were creeping into Saul's Church at Corinth. Saul was therefore chastising his followers for venerating Saul (himself), Apollo, Simon Peter or even Christ instead of Jesus (some manuscripts say Crispus instead of Christ here, which makes a great deal more sense).

These divisions are literally 'splinter-groups', who are creating a divided or splintered Church and therefore a divided or splintered Christ. So it would make much more sense if we translated 'crucify' (*stauroo* σταυρῶ) in its original sense of little stakes of wood, or perhaps even splinters. Likewise, the first reference to 'paul' should also be read in its original sense of 'little' or 'small'. So the verse should actually

therefore a divided or splintered Christ. So it would make much more sense if we translated 'crucify' (*stauroo* σταυρωω) in its original sense of little stakes of wood, or perhaps even splinters. Likewise, the first reference to 'paul' should also be read in its original sense of 'little' or 'small'. So the verse should actually read:

Do not divide Jesus into little splinters for yourselves, nor baptize in the name of Paul (Saul).

The truth is that the crucifixion actually lay some fifteen or so years in the future and so Saul could not have mentioned this central element of Christianity. Which is why have this peculiar situation where the many letters written to the Simple Judaic communities across the Mediterranean,

crucifixion already there.

Therefore, Jerome's fifth century Latin Vulgate translation of the Epistles of Saul – and all of the English versions that have subsequently used Jerome's Latin translation as a helpful guide – are all part-history and part-forgery and we should not take these translations as being the literal truth in any shape or form. In fact, the entire Bible really needs to be carefully retranslated, from Genesis through to Revelations, in order to remove all of these deliberate interpolations and mistranslations. Only then can the public make an informed decision about what they want to believe, and what should be disregarded as utter nonsense.



summary

no other major biblical parable about taxation and absentee landlords has been lifted from Josephus' *Life*.

this again demonstrates that Jesus was alive and well in the AD 60s.

the various dates for Saul-Josephus' epistles are in agreement with the proposal that Saul-Josephus was born in the late AD 30s.

some of the English translations of the New Testament are decidedly suspect, and Saul-Josephus' epistles do not refer to the crucifixion.

*1 Several early manuscripts have the number as seventy-two, which is why the Rotherham, Twentieth Century, Latin Vulgate and other bibles say seventy-two instead. Both this verse and Saul-Josephus' Life may originally have said seventy-two, as this was quite a significant number in early religions, but the knowledge of this number has been largely lost and so later redactors have trimmed the number to seventy. The sacredness of the number seventy-two will be explained later.

*2 Quoted from Gen 12:3.

*3 I put these alternative translations to a native Greek-speaking translator, and while he disagreed with the first reinterpretation I give here, the second two were given his approval.

*4 Fatima was a daughter of Muhummad.



The Poppaea Affair

We have already briefly touched on Saul-Josephus' dramatic voyage to Rome, during which he was shipwrecked, and the next chapter will fill in some more details of this eventful journey. However, having eventually landed in Puteoli, Saul-Josephus set himself up in a position of some luxury and influence in Rome. How did he manage to achieve this?

In their separate stories, Saul, despite being a 'prisoner', manages to obtain his own apartment, complete

with Roman guard to stand outside his door. Was Saul a prisoner, or was he being guarded from his potential enemies? Meanwhile, Josephus, his *alter ego*, meets Aliturus, an actor and confidante of Nero Caesar, and it is through Aliturus that Josephus gets to know Poppaea, the thrice-married wife of Nero.

I became acquainted with Aliturus, an actor of plays, and much beloved by Nero, but a Jew by birth; and through his interest became known to Poppaea, Caesar's wife.^{J1}

Now I'm sorry if I am an inveterate sceptic, but that is not how life works. I have been washed up on the shores of many countries, and not once have I been introduced to the president's wife. While it is true that Saul-Josephus was probably in Rome to plead the case for the ten priests,

regarding the Temple Wall Affair, and so would have met Nero and his secretaries, there is no reason why any of this should have involved the emperor's wife, Poppaea.

There are two possible reasons why Saul-Josephus found it so easy to see Poppaea. The first is that he had a letter of introduction from Berenice, King Agrippa II's sister-wife and one of Saul-Josephus' supporters. The second is that both Saul and Josephus (Saul-Josephus) knew Epaphroditus, Nero's secretary. As we have already seen, both Saul and Josephus (Saul-Josephus) credit Epaphroditus for publishing their works, and so it would appear that Epaphroditus was a secret follower of Simple Judaism.

However, having looked at both possibilities, I think the chances of Saul-Josephus just happening to meet a

fellow follower of Simple Judaism in the very heart of the court of Nero are highly unlikely. In which case, it is likely that the situation was actually reversed. Saul-Josephus was introduced to Poppaea by Berenice, and then used his influence over Poppaea to place his good friend Epaphroditus in a comfortable position as Nero's secretary, which would give Saul-Josephus some useful influence over the emperor. Saul-Josephus was a socialising, networking egotist; he knew how to win friends and influence people and he was good at it too. Simple Judaism was now implanted at the very heart of the Empire, like a cuckoo-chick biding its time while being fed by parents that it despises.

But why did this Temple Wall Affair, which was supposedly the issue that brought Josephus to Rome, become

an Imperial issue? This was just a wall obstructing the view of King Agrippa, and while it may have also obstructed the view of the Roman guards, was that an issue for the Emperor himself to arbitrate upon? I think the issues may go a little deeper than this. The Galilean Sect had been devised by some of Judaea's most eminent men. Jesus of Gamala was a prince of Egypt and Persia, and so the Galilean Sect had the backing of a vast swathe of the Syrio-Judaeian populous. All of this, especially the links of these ex-Babylonian Jews with Parthia (Persia), made this sect very influential in Near Eastern politics, as we shall see later. On top of all this, rumours about the Star Prophecy were circulating the Empire, and the Star Prophecy indicated that a king would be born in the eastern provinces who would rule

the world (ie: take over Rome). Governor Festus was concerned that a rebellion was brewing in Judaea, and so the political implications of all this for the Empire elevated this minor dispute about a Temple wall into a major threat that could not be handled at the local level. Festus was right, of course, for a revolt was brewing, but another five years would elapse before it fully erupted.

However, there is still a major problem with Saul-Josephus' part in all this. The Temple priesthood had sent ten of their most trusted men, plus a high priest and the Temple treasurer (twelve in all), to negotiate over this Temple Wall Affair. These were some of the most eminent men within Judaeian society, who were quite capable of pleading their own case before Nero; so why was Saul-

Josephus, who was only twenty-five years old at the time, being sent to negotiate on their behalf? Either Saul-Josephus was much more important within Judaeen society at this time than he makes out, which is a highly unlikely scenario, or he is covering up the true reason for his journey to Rome. In fact, one suspects that Saul-Josephus was on this particular boat, full of eminent Jewish priests, because he had cut a deal with the Roman governor.

Had Saul-Josephus been a maverick preacher who had fomented a minor theological dispute with the Temple priesthood, he could have been dealt with locally. The fact that Saul-Josephus was on this boat to see Nero means that his charges, or his mission, were much more serious than he makes out. In fact, since Saul-Josephus had

been languishing in jail for seven years prior to this voyage, it is entirely possible that he had cut a deal with Festus to become a Roman spy working undercover in Judaea, in order to free himself. With his new Simple Judaic belief system being more Greco-Roman than Jewish, but nevertheless still being a Jew, Saul-Josephus was well placed to keep an eye on all the Jewish factions in Judaea and report back to Rome. We shall see more evidence for this in later chapters.

This eventful journey to Rome was the beginning of Saul-Josephus' new spying career, and this is the reason why Festus was keen to send a petty rebel to see Nero. In fact, it is likely that Saul-Josephus' new Roman handler was actually Vespasian, the army commander who eventually took

charge of the Roman legions during the Jewish War. The end result of all these political machinations was that Saul-Josephus found himself in Rome with letters of introduction to the Emperor (and perhaps, courtesy of Berenice, to Poppaea too). That both Saul and Josephus met Nero is given in these accounts:

Saul:

The second epistle to Timothy ... was written from Rome, when Paul (Saul) was brought before Nero the second time.^{B2}

Josephus:

I took a voyage to Rome ... (with) certain priests of my acquaintance ... whom were sent to Rome to plead their cause before Caesar ... I became known to Poppaea, Nero's wife, and took care, as soon as possible, to ask her to procure that the priests might be set at liberty (which they were).^{J3}

Now this was a favourite strategy of Saul-Josephus, to ingratiate his way

into the affections of the leader's wife, to gain access to the leader himself, just as he had already done with Berenice (Agrippa II's sister-wife) and was about to do with Claudia (mother of Linus, the second bishop of Rome), as we shall see. According to Josephus, Poppaea was a 'religious woman', and many researchers have interpreted this phrase as implying that she was either a supporter of traditional Judaism or perhaps even a convert to Saul-Josephus' new Simple Judaism (Christianity). Bearing in mind Berenice's evident interest in Saul-Josephus, and the access that King Agrippa II and Berenice would have had to the court of Nero, the latter explanation is the more likely.

It is entirely possible that Berenice was equally enthralled by Simple Judaism – perhaps because she

had a personal interest in Saul-Josephus, or perhaps because Simple Judaism had the potential to unify the segregated populations of Gentiles and Jews that her brother-husband ruled over. If this is so, and both Acts of the Apostles and Josephus' *Life* strongly hint at this possibility, then this would be a good reason for Berenice giving Saul-Josephus letters of introduction to Nero's wife. But such high-level introductions would still imply that Saul-Josephus was an important and influential character in his own right, just as was the family of the biblical Jesus.

In modern terms, this Judaeian dispute is similar to a potential civil war erupting between Israel and the Palestinian states. Would, in this case, the leaders of the two sides be invited to present their respective cases before

the president of the United States? Would, in this case, the Israelis seek to influence the wife of the president, who just happened to be Jewish? Of course they would!

In Josephus' watered-down version of this event, the negotiations were successful, and the envoys of the Temple Wall Affair were allowed to return to Jerusalem, their wall intact. However, it would appear that there were many 'behind the scenes' negotiations that had influenced the outcome:

And when Nero had heard what they had to say, he not only forgave the priests what they had already done but also gave them leave to let the wall they had built stand. This was granted them in order to gratify Poppaea, Nero's wife, who was a religious woman, and had requested these favors of Nero.^{J4}

Which begs the question as to why

Nero let the wall stand. Here was a potential revolution in the making, and Nero does nothing about it. One possible reason for this is that the Empire wished to place its spy back into Jerusalem, and the only way it could do that was to make Saul-Josephus a hero. It was Saul-Josephus who had negotiated this success, courtesy of Poppaea, and it was Saul-Josephus who could now return to Jerusalem in some form of triumph – which may have paved the way for his becoming a Judaeen army commander in AD 66.

The Jewish priests immediately returned home to Judaea, but Saul-Josephus did not. He appears to have stayed in Rome for two or three years, probably enjoying the luxuries and attractions of the Empire's capital city. This was a favourite propaganda tactic

of the Roman authorities. Pluck a few rebel kings or administrators out of the poor fringes of the Empire, pamper them for a few years in the great luxuries of Rome, and promise them a luxurious governorship back in their homelands. In no time at all, the rebel Barbarian had become a poodle to Rome.

Saul-Josephus had likewise taken the golden bait and in later years, during the Jewish War, he continually extols the power, wealth and luxury of Roman life, and how rebelling against Rome is both pointless and futile. The Jewish rebels, however, were of a completely different persuasion, born of a curious, religiously-inspired desire to end their lives in the most painful manner possible. They were the forerunners of the modern Islamic Jihadists, who despise the freedom and

wealth of America and champion the poverty and despotism of back-street Islamia as a more attractive alternative. A curious creed indeed.

During the siege of Jerusalem, many of these Jewish proto-Jihadists were holed up in unsanitary, rat-infested dens and slowly starving to death, while simultaneously demanding to know what Rome had ever done for them. Saul-Josephus could have pointed to the aqueducts, sanitation and public baths; plus the education, irrigation, public order, medicine, and the wine. He could even have pointed to the roads, but even the rebels would have had to agree that ‘the roads go without saying’.

All in all, Saul-Josephus had become an irreconcilable Romophile, and so his temporary position as a Judaeen army commander after AD 66

just has to be suspect. As we shall see, his heart was never in this job, and he was merely going through the motions and gaining a little gold for himself. In short, during the beginning stages of the Jewish War, Saul-Josephus was already working for the Romans, as a spy.

Demise of Saul?

The history of the biblical Saul (Josephus) in Acts of the Apostles ends at this point. There is no further record of him in either Judaea or Rome and we are given absolutely no information about what happened to him. He is presumed to have died in Rome, but there is no evidence for this. Here we have that age-old problem with Christianity: the fact that its most famous sons cannot be found in the

historical record. The Catholic Encyclopaedia says of this conundrum:

... this period is wrapped in deep obscurity for, lacking the account of the Acts, we have no guide save an often uncertain tradition and the brief references in the pastoral epistles.⁵

So there we have it. Here is the great founder of Christianity, one of the world's greatest religions, and he manages to slip under the historical radar. Not one mention, not one image, not one memorial, not one statue, not even one condemnation from the prolific Roman writers and historians of the age. Its no wonder that some writers suggest that the whole of Christianity was a cunning charade dreamed up by Constantine to win the battle of Milvian Bridge.

According to the chronology explored in Chapter II, Saul (Josephus)

set out for Rome in AD 62, and after of an eventful journey of some four or five months arrived in the capital of the empire in AD 63. With there being no further mention of Saul, the clergy have declared that he must have died in Rome at this time, and since Simple Judaism was not popular in Rome at the time, he must surely have been martyred. It is said that his death took place in the 12th, 13th or 14th year of Nero, depending on whether you read St. Epiphanius, Euthalius or St. Jerome, which translates as either AD 66, 67 or 68. However, this fabricated account of Saul's death is far too convenient, and the more radical but logical suggestion – that Saul was Josephus – neatly steps in at this point to fill in the gaps.

Josephus also went to Rome, as we have seen, but due to his rather

more assiduous note-taking we also have a record of the dates of his travel. Like Saul, Josephus travelled to Rome in AD 62, when he was 25 years old (he was 26 by the time he got there, because he did not arrive in Rome until the spring of the following year). Like Saul, he also stayed in Rome for two or three years, and we are quite certain of this because he arrived back in Judaea in AD 65-66, when he became the army commander in charge of Galilee and Gamala. Once more, we see that Saul and Josephus have identical life stories, and once more the information provided by *Life* and *The Jewish War* can fill in the numerous yawning gaps left in the biblical record.

Poppaea

Knowing that Saul was Josephus can therefore assist us in fleshing out the events that occurred during Saul-Josephus' sojourn in Rome, and also suggest a reason for his sudden departure. As we have seen, Saul-Josephus managed to get an audience with Poppaea, and being a 'religious woman' she helped the Judaic priests with their 'Temple Wall' problem. Now since Poppaea was not a Jew, it is unlikely that she would have become a practitioner of orthodox Judaism. However, there was a new brand of much simpler Judaism in town at this time, and its primary priest and practitioner was the young and charming Saul-Josephus himself. Thus, Poppaea may have come under his influence, like so many other well-connected women.

This places quite a different spin

on matters, because it implies that Poppaea helped out the Jewish priests as a favour to her favourite theological mentor. Like many wealthy and influential people – who often appear to be devoid of their own life-principles and so launch themselves into bizarre sects of Kabbalism, Scientology or Mormonism – Poppaea may have been leaning heavily on Saul-Josephus for personal advice, especially if he had taken up the age-old Judaic and Essene practice of fortune-telling at this time. Saul-Josephus was to later provide this service for Vespasian, so why not for Poppaea too? So who was Poppaea, and why did she need this psychological support?

Poppaea Sabina was the only child of Titus Ollius. Although Ollius was a fairly humble administrator in

Roman politics, his daughter was described by Tacitus as 'the loveliest woman of her day'. This golden asset propelled her into a first marriage with Rufrius Crispinus, a leader of the elite Praetorian guard. Crispinus was executed under Nero, so Poppaea then attached herself to Otho, a young noble in the court of Nero. It is not entirely certain if Poppaea and Otho were ever married, however, having been introduced to the royal court the ravishing beauty caught the eye of Nero himself – which was probably her intention from the outset. Poppaea, being a hugely ambitious woman, was not slow to encourage Nero, and so she became his mistress. Flushed with power and influence, Poppaea became one of the most feared women in Rome, and caused intrigue after intrigue within the imperial court. In

using her egotistical influence it is often thought that Poppaea was the inspiration for Nero's murder of his mother, and for the divorce and execution of his wife, Claudia Octavia. Nero and Poppaea eventually married in AD 62, just before the arrival of Saul-Josephus in Rome.

This, then, was the nature of the powerful, dangerous, scheming and unpredictable woman that Saul-Josephus was cosying up to in Rome; he was playing a dangerous game with such a powerful temptress. This is especially so when one considers the date of his dalliance with the royal wife. Rome had burned down in mid July of AD 64, the year after Saul-Josephus had arrived in Rome. The true extent of this fire is still not certain, as only Tacitus makes a great fuss about it, and since Tacitus was

only nine at the time of the fire his is hardly an eyewitness account. In contrast, Pliny, Suetonius and Cassius Dio only mention the fire in passing, while other Roman historians, including Josephus Flavius himself, are completely silent on the fire and also silent on the subsequent persecution of the Simple Judaic Christians. If Saul-Josephus had been in Rome at the time, as he records, and had he been forced to flee the fire, lose his apartment and sleep rough outside the city, I think Saul-Josephus would have bequeathed us several chapters of lamentations. The fact that so many historians ignore or gloss over this incident may well indicate that Tacitus has exaggerated the fire of Rome.

Anyway, one presumes that there was a largish fire in Rome in AD 64, but the subsequent report that the

Christians were blamed for it is highly dubious. Under this new chronology there could only have been a few dozen 'Christians' in Rome in that early era. James, the brother of Jesus, had only just proposed the first rules of 'Simple Judaism' in AD 54, at the start of Saul-Josephus' second tour of the Mediterranean, and Saul-Josephus himself had not even visited Italy. Matthias Barnabas had visited Rome on a missionary tour, but he was teaching Galilean Judaism, not Simple Judaism.

From Saul-Josephus' epistles, we only know of Epaphroditus, Aquila, Priscilla, Eubulus, Pudens, Linus and Claudia who came from Italy, while none of Saul-Josephus' fledgling communities were based there. Before Saul-Josephus' visit in AD 63, I would doubt if there were

more than a dozen or two adherents to Simple Judaism in the city. So why did the Church of Simple Judaism feel the wrath of Nero regarding this fire, rather than any other sect or nationality in Rome? Had Saul-Josephus done something to upset Nero? Quite possibly he had, as we shall see shortly.

Anyway, as we have already seen, Poppaea was the rather unpredictable and errant wife of Nero, while Saul-Josephus claims in *Life* that he had become something of a favourite of the empress. Saul-Josephus was therefore 'riding a tiger' in courting Poppaea as a patron, especially as she had an eye for virile young men. Professor Eisenman says of Poppaea:

(In Rome) Josephus now goes directly to Empress Poppaea, who in addition to taking

an interest in (the Judaic) religion, seems to have had a propensity for young men.⁶

Actually, 'riding' may be the operative verb here, as we shall see. But in many respects these two adventurers in life had a lot in common with each other. Poppaea only lived to massage her own ego and increase her power, just as Saul-Josephus did; and doubtless Poppaea could be all things to all emperors, just as Saul-Josephus was all things to all men. They were two peas in a pod – charismatic individuals who loved to court danger and disaster as much as they liked to foster their own power and influence. But how far would they go? How much caution would they have thrown to the wind?

The full truth will never be known, but the circumstantial evidence is there for all to see. Events were moving fast during the summer of AD

65, and one of the biggest sensations was that Poppaea was pregnant again. Now Nero's first child, Claudia, was so adored by Nero that he named her Augusta (queen), a name derived from the Latin title for leadership. However, his reaction to this second pregnancy was rather different, for Nero kicked Poppaea repeatedly in the stomach, a beating that caused a miscarriage and her eventual death. As Tacitus says:

Soon after the games, Poppaea died. She was pregnant, and her husband, in a chance fit of anger, kicked her.⁷

While we might assume that during his later years Nero was mentally deranged, cruel and decidedly bonkers, he was not clinically mad (although taking a young man called Sporus as a wife to replace the late Poppaea is somewhat certifiable). The natural

instinct of a man is to protect his offspring; and this is not only an act of human kindness and morality, it is also a very strong natural instinct that has been imprinted into every species by natural selection. Only the clinically insane would deliberately kill their own unborn child, unless, of course, the child was not Nero's. But if this were the case, natural selection has likewise placed very strong natural instincts in all species to reject the offspring of a cuckolded mate. Such instincts can be tremendously strong and, when combined with an establishment that says an emperor can do no wrong, the results may well be tragic.

There has to be considerable suspicion that Nero thought himself to be the cuckold, and that this was the reason for the very specific manner in

which he brutally kicked his wife to death. But the question then becomes, if Nero was a cuckold, then who was the real father of this child? Surprisingly, given the magnitude of the events going on in Rome at this time, Josephus says of the years AD 65-66:

... and when ... I had obtained many presents from Poppaea, I returned home again.^{J8}

Conveniently, just as tragedy erupted in the Imperial court that Josephus was so familiar with, he skips the country with more than a few presents from Poppaea. Surprisingly, however, he mentions absolutely nothing about the unfortunate and tragic death of his former Imperial patroness. Again we see the duplicity of Josephus Flavius' accounts, which report anything and everything – unless it adversely

implicates Josephus himself. Here we have two suspicious lacunae in his accounts, lacunae that provide a great deal of information.

Significantly, he does not mention the great fire of Rome and the subsequent persecution of Simple Judaism (Christianity), even though he was probably one of only a handful of representatives of this Church in Rome at the time. Secondly, he does not mention the brutal murder of his Imperial patroness, which was again an event that occurred while he was in Rome. Instead, he casually mentions the lovely presents that his (murdered) patroness gave him, and skips the country. The hubris of the man is stupefying!

Let's face facts. The surprising possibility presenting itself here is that Saul-Josephus was potentially the

father of Poppaea's unborn child. Even if the lascivious Poppaea was physically close to ten men during that particular year, that still leaves a 10% chance that Saul-Josephus was involved. And even if he wasn't the father, Nero would still have suspected him. The culprit was obviously a young man who was a favourite of Poppaea, and Saul-Josephus fitted that bill perfectly. Nero would have been demanding blood!

This is a radical scenario, but one that would explain Nero's violent reaction in every detail. It would explain Nero's murder of his unborn child; it would explain his hatred of the new creed of Simple Judaism; it would explain Saul-Josephus' sudden departure from Rome; and it would explain also why these vital pieces of significant history are missing from

Josephus' accounts. It might also explain why Saul also goes missing from the record of Acts of the Apostles at this same time.

If this suggestion is true, however, it would mean that Saul-Josephus was more than partly responsible for Nero's early demise. The eccentric emperor was hardly respected by the people of Rome anyway, but the murder of his wife was the final nail in his coffin, and his reign would not have long to run after that. Significantly, it was Epaphroditus who finished Nero off; and so it was a member of Simple Judaism, Saul-Josephus' publisher no less, who had the last laugh. Saul-Josephus liked to eventually get the upper hand, after a long struggle, and so this particular victory must have been exceptionally sweet.

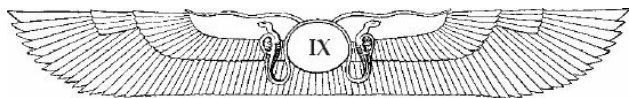
Summary

It would seem that Saul-Josephus became a favourite of Poppaea, Nero's wife.

When Poppaea became pregnant, Nero kicked her to death.

It is likely the Saul-Josephus was implicated in this affair, which is why he left Rome at this time.

If so, it is for this reason that Simple Judaism was despised by Nero, and not because of the fire of Rome.



Revised New Testament

For over two thousand years, Christians across the world have had to rely on the simplicity of faith to nurse their spiritual needs; not necessarily because they wanted to, but because there was no other road down which they could travel in their search for spiritual enlightenment. Faith was the only game in town, for the equivalent real, secular history of these events in Judaea during the first century AD was decidedly lacking. But this is the twenty-first century, and the

modern, enlightened, rational and inquisitive *homo sapien* needs more than an unquestioning trust in a battered text and an archaic creed. We have waited long enough for a historical explanation of the Christian faith and a historical record of the primary players in that drama, but we are now in a position to uncover the true origins of Christianity.

As the preceding chapters have sought to explain, Saul (St Paul), the creator of Christianity, was actually a pseudonym for Josephus Flavius, the historian. The evidence is there for all to see, it is conclusive and it has been extracted directly from the historical record as we know it. However, what has not been done thus far is to connect it all together into a simple narrative of Saul-Josephus' (St Paul's) true life-story. That is the goal of this chapter.

Surprisingly enough, the new version of the life of Saul (St Paul) provided by this new perspective is not too dissimilar to the original, except in its chronology and its implications. We start with the birth of Saul (Josephus) being somewhat later than is traditionally assumed. He was born, as Josephus positively asserts, in the year that Gaius Caesar (Caligula) became emperor, or AD 37.^{J1} It is said of Saul (Josephus) that he was:

A Jew, born (delivered) in Tarsus ... yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward god, as you all are this day.^{B2}

Since *tarsus* ταρσευς means 'basket', this may simply be a reference to Saul being lowered down the walls of 'Damascus' in a basket – with this basket symbolism being a favourite

theme within Judaism, as the Moses story attests. This symbolism was originally Egyptian, of course, and based upon the mythology of Osiris being cast upon the waters of the Nile in a coffin.

Saul makes no mention of his parents in this verse, but says that he was brought up by Gamaliel Γαμαλιηλ. It is not entirely certain who Gamaliel was, but from the accounts of Clement, Josephus, the Talmud and Acts, we do know a great deal about him. He was an influential nobleman, a Pharisee, a leader of the Sanhedrin council; he had sons called Simon and Jesus (the latter son became high priest); he was a supporter of the Galilean Sect but was (at a later date) opposed to Saul-Josephus. Finally, he was pardoned, for a while at least, by Vespasian after the fall of Jerusalem.

In addition, Gamaliel was the only member of the Jewish council, the Sanhedrin, who would defend the disciples of Jesus and James against accusations of teaching blasphemous doctrines. The *Clementine Recognitions* claims that Gamaliel had deliberately remained within the orthodox Sanhedrin (parliament) as a ‘sleeper’ for the Galilean Sect, so that he could use his power and influence to defend the disciples. This was the level of inside assistance that the Galilean Church was getting, and Gamaliel’s call for calm and reason during a particular council meeting did have an effect:

Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles be given a little space ... ‘(so) refrain from (persecuting) these men, and let them alone: for if their

activities are the work of men (rather than god), it will come to nothing.' [B3](#)

In comparison, the *Clementine Recognitions* says of this very same event:

When Gamaliel saw (who was secretly our brother in the faith, but by our advice remained among them) that they were greatly enraged and moved with intense fury against us, he stood up and said: 'Be quiet for a little, O men of Israel ... refrain from these men; and if what they are engaged in be of human council it will soon come to an end; but if it be from god, why will you sin without cause and achieve nothing? For who can overpower the will of god?' (Recognitions 1:65.)

Due to this convenient duplication of the records for this event we now have a much better idea of what the quote from Acts was all about, and we can also see the deliberate omissions that have been made in the gospel version. The location was the Jerusalem

Temple, in the mid-AD 60s just before the great debate in Caesarea was convened. Immediately following Gamaliel's speech James, the brother of Jesus, arose and argued that Jesus was indeed the christ (ie: Jesus was indeed the king). It was at this point that Saul - the enemy as he is called in *Recognitions* - started a riot and threw James down from the top of the Temple steps. In his *Commentaries on the Acts of the Church* Hegesippus says that James was then stoned and hit over the head with a fuller's club. This is the riot that was narrated in full in Chapter II. (See Eusebius, *Church History* 2:23 for Hegesippus' account.)

Note how Acts mentions nothing about this riot after the meeting with Gamaliel, nor of Saul-Josephus' primary roll in fomenting that riot. It is if nothing happened, which is exactly

what Saul-Josephus wants readers to think. In fact, another two chapters pass, from Acts 5:53 to Acts 7:57, before we get to this same riot and the crippling or death of James, and even then the details have been deliberately obscured to protect the guilty. The account of the riot is to be found in the stoning of Stephen, which was explored in some detail in Chapter II, where this embarrassing incident was conclusively demonstrated to have actually been a record of the stoning of James. As a reminder, these verses from Acts said:

Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him (Stephen) with one accord. And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses (martyrs) laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. (Acts 7:57-58.) (author's brackets)

Again we see that Saul (Josephus) was totally innocent of this crime, as he was simply looking after the assailant's clothes - supposedly - which simply demonstrates the degree of political spin that has been applied to these texts.

Or is there more to this verse than meets the eye? Why were the witnesses or martyrs (those doing the stoning, according to Acts 22:20) laying their clothes at Saul's feet? The answer to this conundrum may lie in the alternative report by Hegesippus, who says that an unnamed assailant hit James (Stephen) with a fuller's club, and a fuller is someone who kneads cloth to change its properties. The fuller's job is to tread a pile of clothes with their feet or beat them with a fuller's club, to rework the texture of the fabric into something more like a

felt. Is this why Saul (Josephus) is pointedly said to be 'standing upon' a pile of clothes? Is a later scribe trying to identify him as the assailant with the fuller's club, and therefore the murderer of Stephen-James? In Acts 22:20 Saul admits that he consented in the death of Stephen-James, but in reality he was probably the ring-leader of the assailants.

And although Acts implies that the death of Stephen (James) occurred in the AD 40s, we know exactly when this event really happened because on the next page in *Recognitions* Saul (Josephus) received his army commission from the high priest at Jerusalem, so becoming the army commander in charge of Galilee. Saul (Josephus) then set off for 'Damascus' to arrest those in the Nazarene-Ebionite Church. Yet we know that

Josephus (Saul) became the Galilean army commander in AD 66, after he had returned from Rome, as we shall see shortly. Saul-Josephus would have been about 28 years old at this time, which is just the right sort of age for a commander in a Romo-Judaeen army.

Gamaliel

These observations give us a trail of links between Saul-Josephus and Jesus. Saul-Josephus was originally tutored by Gamaliel (before being mentored by his brother, Matthias Bannus-Barnabas); and Gamaliel was most definitely a supporter of the Galilean Church of Jesus and James, just as the *Clementine Recognitions* claim. In addition, the common name of Gamala-Gamaliel links Gamaliel with Jesus of Gamala. (The various

translations of Josephus' works appear to use the name Gamala and Gamaliel interchangeably.) So who was the venerable sage, Gamaliel?

Recognitions indicates that Gamaliel was old (in AD 66) and that he was someone who was able to bridge the divide between orthodox Judaism and the more revolutionary Galilean Sect. Since the sons of this Gamaliel were Simon and Jesus, and since the latter became high priest, it would seem obvious that Gamaliel was Judas-Zamaris of Gamala (Judas of Gamaliel), the father of Jesus of Gamala. But since Jesus of Gamala was the biblical Jesus, then Gamaliel was simply one of the titles held by Jesus' father. There will be further evidence from the Talmud to this effect in a later chapter. Although how such a figure could sit in the Sanhedrin and

still pretend to be impartial in these matters, as *Recognitions* claims, I do not know.

This is interesting, for if Gamaliel was a senior member of the Sanhedrin and a very influential person in Judaic society, then any child who was tutored by him must have been similarly aristocratic and influential. It's a bit like an American child being brought up at the feet of the Vice President – that just does not happen to a kid from the back-streets of Washington DC. So here is a major break with orthodox teaching, for Saul-Josephus was obviously a very important person in this era, just as Jesus himself appears to have been.

Saul-Josephus says little of his early life until he reached manhood, but there is an oblique suggestion that he had been taken in by the Galilean

Sect or the Essene of Qumran for his education. The Essene are said to have regularly taken in young boys and turned them into educated but dedicated followers of their revolutionary creed, but since Saul-Josephus was not an orphan it is possible is that the Essene community at Qumran was used as a *yeshivah*, a traditional boarding school for Jews.

From what we understand, Saul-Josephus' education was reasonably successful, and in AD 51 at the age of fourteen he says that he amazed the learned men of Jerusalem with his understanding. This is probably a reference to the standard religious test during his *bar mitsvah*, where a young boy wishing to become a Jewish man has to demonstrate his understanding of the Tanakh (Old Testament). Now officially a man in the eyes of

traditional Judaism, Saul-Josephus then undertook some religious training, apparently with all three (or four) sects of Judaism. But rather than all of this being a further course of study in a temple or a *yeshivah*, he also spent much of the next few years as an apprentice missionary on various tours around the Mediterranean, where he was under the guardianship of his elder brother Matthias Barnabas, Simon the Niger and Lucius of Cyrene. It would appear that the Essene school was rather similar in nature to the Watchtower Building of the Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn or the Mormon Missionary Training Center in Salt Lake City. Both of these institutions still train young men to go out into the world and preach their particular brand of indoctrination, with a hope of establishing new communities in new

lands, and that is exactly what the Essene college or *yeshivah* was doing with Saul-Josephus.

It was interesting to watch the modern equivalents of Saul-Josephus in their missionary work in Moscow in 1991, after the USSR collapsed. They were being sent out from the Hotel Baikal in the northeast suburbs to evangelise among the Russian ‘Heathen Atheists’, who were said to be desperately in need of god’s salvation. Unfortunately, what they did not realise was that even under Communism the Russians had always remained a deeply spiritual people, even if that spiritualism was composed of an amalgam of ancient Pagan-style beliefs and rituals superimposed upon a Greek Orthodox form of Christianity. Anyway, these evangelists – who were often ex-criminals trawled from the

vast American penal system with barely six weeks training in Bible study – knew a great deal less about Christianity than their Moscovite ‘Pagan’ victims. The standard riposte was ‘go home Yank, we have been Christian for five times as long as you have been American’.

In a similar fashion, Saul-Josephus had been picked for the great privilege of serving an apprenticeship on a missionary tour of the Mediterranean, organised by the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James (the Essene), and all this at a time when such international travel was the prerogative of the inordinately wealthy. However, upon reaching these foreign, Pagan lands of the Empire, the reaction of the locals was rather similar to the reaction of the bemused Moscovites; except that the

exasperated and enlightened citizens of Asia Minor threw rocks as well as invective against these youthful evangelists.

First tour

From the chronological analysis in Chapter II, it is apparent that Saul-Josephus Barnabas and Matthias Barnabas' first missionary tour began in about AD 53, when Saul-Josephus would have been sixteen years old. Barnabas, Saul-Josephus' brother, would have been a few years older, say nineteen. This may seem young for two evangelists to set out on their own across Europe, but it is more or less what Mormon and Jehovah's Witness evangelists do to this day. The younger the better, for the young have no desperate ties or commitments to their

home town and no hardened opinions of their own to overcome. Churches need malleable cannon-fodder for missionary work, not considered opinions and difficult questions.

The itinerary of this first tour was extensive, with visits to Salamis and Paphos on Cyprus, Attalia in Pamphylia, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium in Galatia, and Lystra and Derbe in Lycaonia. The journey then backtracked to Attalia and then to Syrian Antioch and finally back to Jerusalem. Once back in the capital city these intrepid evangelists, who had been spreading the word of the new Galilean Sect of Jesus and James among the Diaspora Jews of the Empire, informed the other disciples of their great achievements. They put on a brave face, but in truth much of this missionary tour was marked by

stonings, riots and unrest, which had seen Saul-Josephus and Barnabas fleeing from city to city. A propaganda success this tour was not.

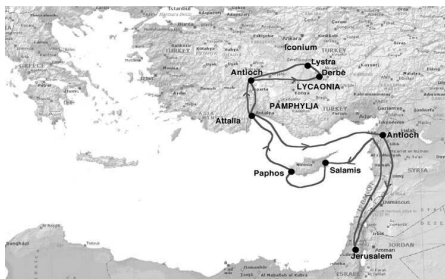


Fig 9.1 Saul-Josephus' first tour of the Mediterranean.

It is unlikely that evangelising to Gentiles was a primary objective on this first missionary tour of the Mediterranean, for the Galilean Sect was Jewish and they were seeking to convert Jewish opinion to the coming

of a new messiah – the coming of a new secular king of the Jews. This was the king that the Star Prophecy foretold, so they said, and the Jews should all support him when he comes. The ‘star’ that rose in the east was, of course, Jesus himself, the new King of the Jews (and Rome too, if he could arrange this).

When the Magi had heard the king, they departed. And the star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child (Jesus) was.^{B4}

However, one significant outcome of this tour was the degree of interest shown in this messianic imagery by the Greek-speaking Gentiles of the Empire. The Galilean Sect may have been composed of rebellious radicals, but they were still supposed to be Egypto-Jews born of Egypto-Jewish

families and strict followers of Mosaic customs and law, and it must have seemed strange that many a Gentile had also shown an interest in their creed. Saul-Josephus must have pondered over this peculiarity for some time, on the long journey back to Jerusalem.

This Gentile interest must certainly have made an impression on this young evangelical adventurer, because the first thing that Saul-Josephus did upon his return to Jerusalem, was go to James Justus (the brother of Jesus) and request that he make things easier for the Gentiles to join their sect. The Gentiles were keen, but circumcision and the prohibition of their eating and drinking with their previous friends of other creeds was never going to draw in the crowds. What Saul-Josephus wanted was some rules for a new sect — Galilean

Judaism Lite – an almost parallel sect of lower initiates who might be useful as the foot-soldiers of real Galilean Judaism. For whatever reason, James complied with the young lad's wishes and drafted a letter that declared:

For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if you keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.^{B5}

Wow! Here was an entire revolution in a single paragraph – the entire book of Mosaic law reduced down to four rules! This was the fundamental edict that led towards Saul-Josephus' new brand of Simple Judaism for the Gentiles, and it was being suggested and promoted by none other than St James himself. However, the

revolution did not stop there for, liberated by James' concessions, Saul-Josephus took a few more liberties of his own and went much further than anticipated:

Before faith came, we were confined under the law (of Moses), kept under restraint until faith should be revealed ... But now that faith (in Jesus) has come, we are no longer under a custodian (of Mosaic law).[B6](#)

Let's look at this verse more carefully. The previous Jewish 'faith' was the law (of Moses), which was also the law of the land. But now Saul-Josephus had created a new faith (in Jesus), the old faith (the law) could be ditched in its entirety. It is a bit like saying that a belief in Mormonism or Scientology abrogates the entire judicial system of America!

In a puff of contorted logic, Saul-Josephus had arranged for the

termination of 1300 years of Judaic law; and so his logic might be favourably compared to Douglas Adams using the Babel Fish to prove that god does not exist (in *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*). However, the gullible Gentiles took the bait, hook, line and sinker, and converts to this new version of the Galilean Sect grew exponentially.

This was Judaism without the plethora of incomprehensible laws, this was Judaism without circumcision, this was Judaism without kosher foods, this was even Judaism for non-Jews. Indeed, this was Judaism without Judaic (Mosaic) law! This revolutionary new creed was a much modified and simplified Judaism, or Simple Judaism for short – Judaism for Gentiles. Thus, it would appear that it was James himself who placed Saul-

Josephus upon this road towards his new Judaic creed of Simple Judaism or Christianity, but it was Saul-Josephus who saw the opportunities that it provided and created a splinter-group that became far more powerful than its parent.

Second tour

There is no firm dating possible for the end of Saul-Josephus' first tour or for the beginning of his second, but a good estimation for the latter would be about AD 54. Armed with this letter from James, which endorsed a simplified Judaism for the Gentiles, the adventurous evangelists set off for Antioch once more; but this time Saul-Josephus was going to concentrate on gullible Gentiles rather than the Jewish Diaspora.

However, in Antioch Saul-Josephus and his brother Matthias Barnabas had a violent disagreement, and while Barnabas and John Mark went off in one direction, Saul-Josephus and Silas went in another. It was undoubtedly this new brand of Simple Judaism that caused the rift between Saul-Josephus and Barnabas, who had been his former mentor and travelling companion. Following this split, Saul-Josephus and Silas then embarked on a grand tour of Lystra, Derbe and Iconium in Galatia, Phrygia, Troas, Philippi, Thesalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Assos, Kios, Samos, Cos, Rhodes, Tyre and finally Caesarea.

After many an adventure, including a heated dispute with the biblical Jesus' son, Saul-Josephus ended up back in Jerusalem in about

AD 56 during the governorship of Felix. In Josephus' parallel account of his life, he says that he 'returned to Jerusalem' after his long apprenticeship with Bannus (Barnabas) in AD 56, aged nineteen, and this just has to be the equivalent of Saul's return to Jerusalem after his missionary tours. This demonstrates, once more, that Saul-Josephus was a relative youngster during this period, rather than the middle-aged man claimed by classical theology.



Fig 9.2 Saul-Josephus' second tour.

Although his first tour was very much as an apprentice, operating under the wing and guidance of his older brother, during his second tour Saul-Josephus had already begun to flex his independence in both thought and deed. Little did James realise, when he made these concessions, that the young Saul-Josephus' evangelism to the Gentiles would result in divisions, discord and eventual ruin for the Galilean Sect. We can see evidence of those disputes in his many letters, and here, for instance, Saul (Josephus) says of Peter:

But when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I (Saul) opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party.^{B7}

Here is a decidedly duplicitous St Peter, desperately trying to bridge the ever-growing gap between these two sects, which were rapidly becoming rivals rather than partners. It would seem that while Peter was staying with Saul-Josephus he was happy to eat with Gentiles, but when emissaries from James arrived, he tried to behave like a pious Jew and separate himself from the non-Jews. This was the whole problem with Judaism in the Empire, or Islam within the European Community for that matter, for you cannot have one sect who treats all the other members of society as lepers. This was why Saul-Josephus and his new creed found a sympathetic ear in Vespasian, especially after the latter had become Emperor and was looking for greater homogeneity within the Empire.

Eventually, it became obvious that Saul's new sect of Simple Judaism had become an entirely separate creed. Saul had picked up elements from the Gnostic mystery schools of the Egypto-Greek religions and melded those with elements of Judaism to form a new perspective on the life of Jesus and the Star Prophecy. Suddenly, we have the concept of the dying and resurrecting god-man and the drinking of blood, which were both taboo concepts for traditional Judaism and came instead from the cults of Osiris, Dionysus and Mithras.

These rites were a gross distortion of the values and creed of the Galilean Sect, not to mention a gross distortion of the political aims of their leaders, and so the brothers of Jesus wrote to their congregations warning them to beware of Saul-

Josephus. One of those letters is even preserved within the New Testament, although it has been relegated to the very end of the epistles, just before Revelations. It is a letter from Jude (Judas Iscariot), the brother of James and Jesus. It says:

Jude, a servant of (King) Jesus and brother of James ... I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For admission (to the Galilean Sect) has been secretly gained by some ... ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our god into licentiousness and deny our only master, (King) Jesus ... These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own passions, loudmouthed boasters, flattering people to gain advantage. [B8](#) (my brackets)

I have taken the liberty of translating 'christ' into 'king', as that is what the word means and it places the import of the message back into its true context.

Note that those who Judas rails against are described as being 'flattering boasters' who secretly joined the Galilean Sect (or were perhaps admitted under false pretences), which was a common criticism of Saul-Josephus and one to which he readily admitted.

Here is Saul-Josephus – who had taken the Egypto-Judaism of the Galileans and combined it with elements of the Gnostic mystery schools – being roundly condemned by the brothers of Jesus and the leaders of the Galilean Sect. It should not come as a great surprise, therefore, that as soon as Saul-Josephus arrived back in Jerusalem from his second tour he was promptly arrested by the authorities for teaching doctrines that were incompatible with Judaism, and for bringing Greeks (Gentiles) into the

Temple of Jerusalem. This was not necessarily Saul-Josephus teaching the life and crucifixion of Jesus at this time, as this event is presented to us in the New Testament, but rather that he had begun to teach his version of Simple Judaism to the Diaspora and Jerusalem Jews (instead of to the Gentiles).

As we have already seen, Saul-Josephus' Simple Judaism for the Gentiles was certainly going to be incompatible with orthodox Judaism, and this was not simply due to arguments over banned foods, resurrection and blood sacrifice; the items that James had laid out in his letter. The primary bone of contention here was actually the divisive business of circumcision. Saul-Josephus had become virulently opposed to circumcision, most probably because

he was converting adults who were highly nervous about such a procedure. It is likely, therefore, that he was arrested not only for campaigning against circumcision, but also for bringing an uncircumcised man onto the Temple Mount.

Placed in jail and then under some kind of house arrest, Saul-Josephus then began his seven years in the wilderness. In his book entitled *Life* he completely skips this period, which is a sure sign that there was something to hide from his Roman patrons. However, in Acts of the Apostles he is rather more free to play the sympathy card, and so we get the full details of his four trials – there being no rules regarding double jeopardy in those days. The first trial was before the Sanhedrin, the appointed elders of the priesthood; the

second was before Felix, the Roman governor of Judaea; the third was before Festus, a new Roman governor of Judaea; and the final trial was before King Agrippa II himself.

Clearly, this entire procedure took an inordinate amount of time – Josephus' seven missing years – and during all of this time Saul-Josephus languished under house arrest or in prison. However, every cloud has a silver lining, as they say, and so while enduring this enforced confinement Saul-Josephus took the opportunity to become acquainted with Procurator Felix and his wife Drusilla. He even tried to make a conversion to his new creed of Simple Judaism, but Felix eventually cut him short and ended the audience. He then tried to do the same to King Agrippa and his sister Berenice, but again Agrippa rebuffed

his approach.

In his dealings with Drusilla, Berenice, Poppaea and Claudia, Saul-Josephus seems to have been quite a ladies' man, ever keen to interest and entice the woman of the house as a method of converting the whole family to his creed. This trait may possibly argue against the modern perception that Saul was very short and broad shouldered with a large aquiline nose; an unattractive Fagin-like character who shuffled from congregation to congregation. There are, of course, no contemporary reports as to what Saul (Josephus) looked like and these unflattering descriptions come from various third and fourth century descriptions. In fact, the notion of Saul-Josephus being short may have simply come from his new name, Paul (Paulos Παῦλος), which means

‘small’. While it is possible that this new name was simply a sobriquet or nickname based upon his real physical stature, a much better explanation can be found in the similar nickname that was given to James Justus:

There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome.^{B9}

James, the brother of Jesus, was surnamed Less, and in the Greek this name is actually *mikros* μικρός which also means ‘small’. As Adam Clarke notes, James was given this name because he was the junior to Jesus, his elder brother. In a similar fashion, Saul (Saul-Josephus Barnabas) was also the junior to his elder brother, Matthias Barnabas. But there was a definite confusion here, because both brothers

were surnamed Barnabas, and so Saul was likewise called 'junior' to differentiate the two. But instead of being named *mikros* Saul was called *paulos*, with both words meaning 'small' or 'junior', and thus Saulos Σαυλος (Saul) became Paulos Παυλος (Paul).

In other words, it is highly unlikely that Saul (Josephus) was short and ugly. In fact, this new chronology indicates that he was actually a young, intelligent lad who was in his early twenties at this time; and since he appears to have had a great deal of success with the aristocratic ladies of Judaea and Rome, one might easily propose that he was actually a handsome young man. In fact, this new association between Saul and Josephus does, of course, give us a possible likeness in the form of a bust, in which

Josephus (Saul) looks reasonably handsome. But even this sculpture is not definitely of Josephus (Saul-Josephus). See figures 1.2 and 6.2.

Whatever his appearance, Saul-Josephus was demonstrably intelligent, an engaging socialite and highly adept at worming his way into the affections of people in general and ladies in particular. In fact – since his primary tactics included flattery, charm, and remembering a whole host of names and personal details – he may well have been the original author of the current bestseller, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. However, Festus proved to be one of his few failures, and upon hearing Saul-Josephus' usual evangelical patter he declared:

Festus said with a loud voice, 'Saul, you are mad; your great learning is turning you

After seven years in prison and four trials before the most eminent authorities of this era, the considered opinion of one of these eminent judges was that Saul-Josephus was clinically insane. Clearly, the dashing and articulate evangelist was out on a theological limb at this point in time, persecuted and ridiculed by many in the Romo-Judaeian establishment.

Shipwreck

Despite noticing Saul-Josephus's instability and eccentricity, both Festus and Agrippa found that he had done nothing criminally wrong, not under Roman law at any rate. But for some reason they decided to send Saul-Josephus to Rome to have an audience

with Nero anyway. The claim that they only sent Saul-Josephus to Rome because he had insisted on proving his innocence, even though he had already been found innocent, is an argument that makes little or no sense. The truth of the matter is more likely that Saul-Josephus, in return for his freedom, had cut a deal with the Roman authorities to become a spy or even a subversive, tasked with undermining revolutionary Judaism. Evidence for this will become apparent as we proceed.

The end result was that Saul-Josephus had to be sent to Rome, along with the Temple priests who were being sent there because of the Temple Wall Affair. They set off from Caesarea in a ship that was 'registered' in Adramyttium. It must have been an impressive vessel, as in

addition to its usual cargo it was taking several 'hundred' assorted prisoners, petitioners and guards. There may be an element of exaggeration here, as is often the case with the works of Saul-Josephus, but nevertheless we can be fairly certain that this was a large ocean-going vessel that may well have had cabin space below decks.

The vessel dropped in at Sidon, a short way up the coast, no doubt to offload some cargo, and from there they set sail for Cyprus. Blown off course to the north by unfavourable winds they missed Cyprus entirely and were forced to put into Myra in Lycia on the south coast of Asia Minor. They then swapped ships onto an Alexandrian vessel and sailed along the coast of Asia Minor to Cnidus, and then southwards to Crete. Passing east of Salmone Point on the east of Crete,

they followed the south coastline to a small port called Lasea.

The harbour at Lasea was not suitable for a long (overwinter) stay and so they set sail again and edged westwards along the coast of Crete looking for a safer harbour at a location called Phoenix; but a great storm came up out of nowhere and the howling northeasterly winds blew them away from the island. Unable to battle against the storm, the sailors threw out the sea anchor from the rear of the boat (to keep the boat parallel to the wind so that it did not capsize) and let the boat be driven by the winds. They zipped past Cauda (a small island off Crete) but then became fearful of running ashore on the sandbanks of Syrtis (off the north African coast near Benghazi).



Fig 9.3 Saul-Josephus' voyage to Rome.

The sailors were also fearful of losing their lifeboat, which was trailing behind them, so it was brought up on board. Clearly, the author of this account in Acts knew what he was talking about, and so this reads like a firsthand account of a ship in a storm, rather than the daydreams of a desk-bound scribe. Saul-Josephus must have been caught in a real storm and witnessed these very events first hand to have injected such realism and detail into his story – especially the interesting assertion that mariners in

this era trailed a lifeboat behind them.

Blown by the wind for a number of days, the ship's crew grew concerned about the amount of water the boat was taking in, so they lightened the ship by throwing everything they could overboard. After a few more days, the sailors sensed that they were approaching land, presumably by hearing the thunder of breakers in the distance. Plumbing the depth of the sea with a lead line, it was realised that they were approaching shallow waters, and so the sailors were all for taking to the lifeboat and leaving the passengers to their fate. Saul-Josephus, in a moment of commanding lucidity, ordered the soldiers to stop guarding the prisoners and throw the lifeboat overboard, so the sailors could not abandon ship; because 'unless these sailors stay with

the ship, none of us can be saved'. With the lifeboat thrown overboard and with the sailors suddenly tied to the destiny of the mothership, they ran out two anchors from the front of the boat, in order to stop the boat from running onto the approaching rocks. Again the dramatic detail and the intimate maritime knowledge smacks of a real-life account of a storm.

As the first glow of dawn illuminated the storm-tossed seas, the huddled passengers at last sighted an unknown sandy shore ahead, and so the sailors planned to run the ship up the beach and to relative safety. But as the ship approached the shore it struck a sandbar some way off and stuck fast, while the stormy sea pulverized the back end of the ship into match-wood. The ship was lost, and the crashing breakers were threatening to drown

everyone within sight of a safe and sandy haven. Leaping into the sea and catching hold of drifting planks, the whole ship's company, both prisoners and crew, eventually struggled ashore. They had survived, but only just.

There was a manor house nearby, so the bedraggled survivors of this great adventure sought refuge and the hospitality of the owner. The estate belonged to Publius, a senior official on the island, who informed them that they had landed in Malta. Publius kindly entertained this huge party of survivors for three full days, before they were able to make their way to the capital city and find lodgings there. Shipping tended to be seasonal in this early era, and so the entire company was forced to overwinter in Malta for three long months. As the spring weather improved and commercial

shipping resumed, they were eventually able to find an Alexandrian ship called Castor and Pollux, which was bound for Italy, and they set sail once more for Syracuse, Rhegium and eventually Puteoli near modern Naples.

It should be emphasised that both of these accounts – about Saul in Acts and about Josephus in *Life* – narrate this same story about a shipwreck while *en-route* to Rome, and ending up on another ship that took them to Puteoli. Josephus says that there were six hundred people on board but only 80 were saved, while Saul says that there were 276 people aboard and all were saved. Personally I think that even 276 passengers and crew is far too much for a vessel of this era, let alone Josephus' 600, so either there has been some

exaggeration here or perhaps a slight mistranslation. Regarding the latter possibility, the Rotherham Bible says that there were just 76 people aboard, instead of 276, a figure which tallies well with Josephus' 80 survivors.

However, the bottom line here is that Saul and Josephus both relate the same story about being aboard the same shipwreck and so the only logical conclusion, once more, is that Saul was Josephus (Saul-Josephus).

Rome and Poppaea

On arrival in Rome in early AD 63, Saul-Josephus met up with a few friends for a few beers at the Three Taverns pub (bar) in Appius, where he no doubt bored them to tears with a great rendition of his adventure. He stayed with his friends for a week, and

then he managed to obtain his own apartment; complete with a Roman guard. But if the authorities wanted Saul-Josephus held securely, they could have thrown him in prison, and so one suspects that the guard was there to keep his enemies out, rather than keep him in.

We tend to think of Saul-Josephus, or rather the Church would like us to think of Saul-Josephus, as being some semi-starved vagabond dressed in rags and thrown into prison, simply for doing all in his power to promote his new Church of Simple Judaism (Christianity). However, time and time again we encounter evidence that demonstrates that this imagery is far removed from the truth. Even according to the New Testament account, Saul-Josephus was on first-name terms with the governors,

procurators, priests and even the king of Judaea; while Procurator Felix in particular was hoping for a fat bribe from Saul-Josephus in order to acquit him of the charges.

At the same time (Felix) hoped that money would be given him by Saul. So he sent for him often and conversed with him.[B11](#)

Here is the spectacle of an obsequious Roman governor of Judaea flattering a prisoner in his charge, in the hope that he will be paid off with a handsome bribe. Governors of countries, whether ancient or modern, do not fawn in such a manner before paupers and hermits; but they might sink to such levels in the presence of a billionaire. Clearly, Saul-Josephus was a man of some means, able to influence and possibly bribe the civil administrator of a wealthy Roman province. Contrary to

Church propaganda, Saul-Josephus was rich and influential and this is the reason he was here in Rome; for in return for his freedom, Rome had a little job for him.

Thus, Saul-Josephus's existence in Rome appears to have been rather comfortable. Despite his being a 'prisoner', as Acts relates, he had his own apartment with *en-suite* guards, for two or so years. In addition, he was also in a position to afford and employ his own scribes or the use of a publishing house, to assist in his copious letter writing.

However, the good times were about to come to an abrupt end, for the so-called Great Fire of Rome resulted in a widespread 'persecution' of Simple Judaists (Christians). However, as we have already seen, there were perhaps only a dozen or so

of Saul-Josephus' new sect in Rome at this time. Tacitus, writing in the second century AD, appears to contradict this view, for in the paragraphs that describes the great fire of Rome he says:

Hence to suppress the rumor, Nero falsely charged with the guilt, and punished Christians, who were hated for their enormities ... a vast multitude, were convicted, not so much of the crime of incendiarism as of hatred of the human race.¹²

Since Tacitus is also the only historian who mentions the enormous proportions of the 'Great Fire' of Rome, he is likely to be wrong about the size of the resultant persecution too. In fact, the persecution of 'Christians' may actually have been the persecution of Saul-Josephus himself, following Nero's suspicion that he was

involved with his wife, Poppaea. The evidence for Saul-Josephus' involvement in the tragic demise of Poppaea is only circumstantial, but what *is* known is that Saul-Josephus made a quick exit from Rome at this very same time. How this 'escape' was arranged is uncertain, for there is no mention of Saul-Josephus being released from any detention or travel restrictions, which again suggests that he was in Rome of his own free will and as a guest of the authorities, as Josephus relates.

However, this would not have been the end of Saul-Josephus' problems, for if Nero had been suspicious about his proximity to Poppaea, then the long arm of Roman law could easily have caught up with him in Judaea. But luck was, as ever, smiling brightly upon the fugitive Saul-

Josephus, for if he had indeed been fleeing the wrath of Nero after the death of Poppaea, he would have arrived back in Judaea in the late autumn of AD 65 or perhaps early AD 66; a date which accords very well with what we know of Josephus' travels.

Saul-Josephus may well have been a fugitive from Roman law, but he would only have needed to lie low for a couple months before the Jewish Revolt started, and as soon as it did start he and most of Judaea would have been outside the jurisdiction of Roman law. The distinctly Romophile Saul-Josephus has always seemed an unlikely candidate for organising a war against Rome, but had he been a fugitive at this time this would have provided him with all the motivation he required. As long as Nero was

alive, there was no possibility of him fighting alongside the Romans; but, as we shall see, when Nero did meet his predictable demise Saul-Josephus did indeed swap allegiances.

Jewish Revolt

The reason for the Jewish Revolt against Rome appears to be highly complex, but the purpose of this next section is to distil these complexities down to one simple factor. The only problem being that the true cause of the Jewish Revolt, and the eventual destruction of Jerusalem, is rather theologically explosive.

It is difficult to pinpoint one particular incident or atrocity as the starting point of the Revolt, but the event that is often cited as the beginning of the Revolt occurred in the

May of AD 66, when a group of Jewish Sicarii rebels surprised the Roman garrison at Masada and slaughtered them all. [J13](#)

However, Judaeo-Israel had been a hotbed of revolt for some years before this attack on Masada and one of the major incidents was the attack by the Egyptian False Prophet (the biblical Jesus) on Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. This occurred during the rule of Felix, or from AD 52 - 58, while Saul-Josephus was either on tour or in prison. The attack was thwarted by the Roman garrison in Jerusalem, just as both Josephus and the New Testament reports, but there were many other disturbances and assassinations conducted by the Sicarii.

In AD 58 there was a change of administration in Jerusalem and Procurator Felix was replaced by

Festus, who was in turn replaced by Albinus in AD 62. By all reports Albinus was a bit of a tyrant, but just when everyone had breathed a sigh of relief when he was replaced, his successor turned out to be even worse. Florus, who became governor in AD 64, overtaxed and over-governed the province until the general population were boiling with anger:

Nobody could outdo him in disguising the truth, nor could anyone contrive more subtle ways of deceit. He thought it petty to get money out of single persons, so he stripped whole cities and ruined complete communities, and announced that everyone could be a criminal as long as he made money out of it. The result was that every district was laid waste and many people left their homes and fled to foreign provinces.^{J14}

The bottom line, as ever in these disputes, was tax. As we saw previously, Florus was not only over

taxing the people of Judaea, he was also using the Roman military to force the Galilean Sect to pay taxes. But the eastern provinces of Palmyra and Gamala had been promised to Judas-Zamaris of Gamala and the Babylonian Jews, tax-free. Besides, the Galilean Sect controlled their own army, so Florus was dealing with fire here. This concern about tax is why there are 21 references to tax-collectors in the New Testament, and some of the disciples were tax-collectors themselves. This was the primary concern of Jesus (of Gamala), and he was now being forced to pay some of these taxes to Rome.

Then said Jesus unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. [B15](#)

But this payment of taxes to Rome was not by choice, it was by force, and the

result was going to be war. The conflict began with the storming of Masada by the Sicarii, as already mentioned, and there was a strategic plan to starting the rebellion in this remote backwater on the shores of the Dead Sea. Although Masada was miles away from the center of power and a backwater militarily, it did house King Agrippa's armoury, and so the rebels were now well armed. Thus, the taking of Masada started the Jewish Rebellion, and the eventual retaking of Masada by the Romans would symbolically and materially end it.

Shortly after this attack, the same Sicarii rebels took control of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, by the use of the Sicarii's daggersmen mixing with the festival crowds and causing mayhem in the city with multiple assassinations of Temple authorities

and priests. This was the very time when Jesus of Gamala is said to have become high priest of Jerusalem, and so an element of force was obviously involved in the new electoral process.

A novel method of sustaining the rebellion was the seizure of the city's tax and banking records, which the rebels promised to burn if the common people (who all had debts) would join them in the uprising. Robin Hood must have been a student of Judaeian history! The chief protagonist in these attacks was said to be Simon the Sicarii, and it is here that we begin to tread on very sensitive theological toes, for it is likely that Simon was actually the biblical Simon Zelotes, Jesus' disciple and brother.

We know that Jesus had Zealots and Sicarii among his disciples because the text tells us so. Judas

Ιουδας was known as Iscariot Ισκαριωτης, a name that was directly derived from the Sicarii Σικαριοι: who were named after their small curved daggers that were used both for circumcision and assassination. Likewise, the disciple called Simon Σιμων was called either the Canaanite Κανανιτης or Zelotes ζηλωτης, and both of these names are taken from the title of the Zealots ζηλωτης. The Zealots took their title from *zeo* ζεω meaning 'boil' and the name refers to someone who will boil with rage and vigorously defend something, and in this case they were defending not just what they considered to be the true form of Judaism, but also the right to levy their own taxes.

In other words, the rather unpalatable truth that rises up from an analysis of these texts is that, from the

attack by the Egyptian False Prophet (the biblical Jesus) to the titles of Jesus' disciples, it is abundantly clear that the Jewish Revolt was precipitated by the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James. They may have even used their revolutionary faction, the Essene, under the command of Simon the Zealot and Judas the Sicarii to take the Masada fortress and the Temple Mount. This is another reason why I think that the Jesus of Gamala, who was elected high priest at this time, was the biblical Jesus, for he was being assisted by his brothers.

However, the political allegiances in this dispute were, as one might expect, rather complicated. As well as supporting the rebels who had taken Masada, Jesus of Gamala was also a supporter of King Agrippa II, sending him 2,000 mounted archers,

which were the traditional military vanguard of the Babylonian Jews in Aurania (the Galilean Sect). Agrippa was likewise divided in his loyalties, for he was a Roman vassal and staunch supporter of Rome who was also supporting the rebellion. Agrippa confirmed this, not only by employing Philip of Gamala as a minister, but also by sheltering Justus of Tiberias (who was probably Jesus of Gamala) from the Romans.

This duplicity may indicate that there had been a political split within the Galilean Sect, with rebel factions like the Essene becoming ever more militant, or it may simply demonstrate that there was a very complex strategy to this revolt, with the Romans being used as an unwitting mercenary force by the Galilean Sect to defeat the Temple authorities. If this latter option

was the plan, it would appear to have backfired spectacularly; but it is no wonder that the Romans needed a spy in Judaea to tell them what on Earth was going on.

Meanwhile, the rebels in the city of Jerusalem attacked the Antonia Fortress, which housed the Roman garrison. After two days, the garrison was stormed and the Romans slaughtered, and so there was no going back now.^{J16} This was war with Rome. The rebels then besieged the palace, to which King Agrippa's soldiers had fled, and after a hard fought battle it was agreed that the soldiers in the palace, being fellow Jews, could leave the city unmolested.

Faced with this general uprising, which if left unchecked could spread to other Roman provinces, Gaius Cestius Gallus, the commander of the Roman

military in Syria and the Levant, gathered together all the forces he could muster. These included a Roman legion (comprising 6,000 professional soldiers) plus a thousand men from King Agrippa and another 4,000 infantry and cavalry from King Sohemus of Emesa (modern Homs in Syria). Cestius boldly moved his large army south and after encountering very little opposition *en-route*, encamped outside Jerusalem. But, in a strategic blunder of epic proportions, Cestius persuaded his allies to allow his troops into the city; but then got bogged down in street fighting. Upon making a strategic withdrawal he got caught out in difficult terrain outside the city, and his increasingly rapid strategic withdrawal began to look more like panic. This uncoordinated retreat emboldened the Sicarii rebels, who

eventually gained the high ground and decimated the entire Romo-Syrian army. The invincible Roman army had lost and the rebels were exultant.

It was at this point in time that Saul-Josephus, now working as a Roman spy, may have gone to see Vespasian in Greece. As I have indicated previously, it is entirely possible that Saul-Josephus may have already been recruited by the Romans, to assist in their counter-revolutionary strategy for Judaea. Saul-Josephus' flight from Rome in AD 65 may have disturbed this plan somewhat, by making him a fugitive of Nero, but Nero's basal and erratic behaviour had alienated the emperor from much of the Roman aristocracy and so Saul-Josephus now had influential company in his dislike of Nero.

The evidence that Saul-Josephus

was working for the Romans at this time comes from Professor Robert Eisenman, who links Saul (who is actually called Saulos Σαυλος in the New Testament) with the Saulos who appears in the works of Josephus Flavius. As Eisenman says:

As described by Josephus, Saulos is involved in activities not dissimilar to Saul, namely leading a riot in Jerusalem ... that is perilously similar to the riot in Acts 8:1-3.¹⁷

Those riots occurred AD 66, at the outset of the Jewish War and just before the defeat of Cestius. It is at this same time that a certain Costabarus and Saulus were sent to Greece:

However, Cestius sent Saulos and his (brother, Costabarus), at their own desire, to Greece, to Nero, to inform him of the great distress they were in, and to lay the blame of their kindling the war upon Florus, as hoping to alleviate his own danger, by provoking his

The name Costabarus is taken from *kokhab* כוכב meaning ‘star’, and so Costabarus and his brother Saulos appear to be Matthias Barnabas and his brother Saul-Josephus Barnabas (Barnabas or Barsabas means ‘Son of the Star’). These brothers, who must have had a reconciliation, were sent off supposedly to Nero, who was giving a concert in Greece. But if Saul-Josephus was still a wanted man, he is more likely to have gone to see Vespasian, who was also in Greece at this time and was in grave danger of losing his life for falling asleep during one of the Emperor’s appalling concerts.

This mission, to appraise Vespasian of the uprising in Judaea, goes some way towards proving that Saul-Josephus was working for the

Romans at this time. We shall see later that Vespasian was 'angry' at Saul-Josephus' late defection to the Romans during the siege of Jotapata, as though his defection had been pre-planned.

Commander

The Romans had previously been the military and police force in control of all Judaeo-Israel, but now they had withdrawn from the region there was a complete power vacuum. The Jerusalem priesthood moved quickly to fill this space by appointing regional military commanders, and it was at this time that Saul-Josephus was charged by High Priest Ananus to take military command of Galilee and Gamala. So who was this high priest? Well, 'Ananias' appears to be a formal title of the high priesthood; but, according

to the list of high priests given by Saul-Josephus, the incumbent in AD 66 was none other than Matthias ben Theophilus (Barnabas), who was quite possibly Saul-Josephus' brother. Is this why Josephus calls him 'Costabarus' earlier in his story, to cover up his trip to Greece?

With his brother being high priest, it is not so surprising that Saul-Josephus got a position as army commander at this time. This appointment was made in AD 66 and Saul-Josephus was charged by Ananus (Matthias) with 'inducing the hotheads to lay down their arms'.^{J19} The region he was placed in charge of was Gamala and Galilee, which was exactly the same region that was already independently governed by Jesus of Gamala.

This appointment of a new

commander for Galilee was sure to provoke a clash, as Jesus was not about to give up control of the region on the say-so of either Saul-Josephus or, indeed, the new Jerusalem priesthood (Jesus having relinquished the high priesthood in AD 64). Predictably, the main protagonist that Saul-Josephus came into contact with in Galilee was this same Jesus of Gamala. Since this same Jesus was also the leader of the Galilean Sect, it would seem likely that the ‘hotheads’ the Jerusalem priesthood were referring to were again the members and leaders of the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James (plus the Essene splinter-group in Qumran). Therefore, it was the Galilean Sect that was instigating and promoting the Jewish Revolt, and this appears to be entirely correct, for Saul-Josephus says:

Of the Galilean Sect of Jewish philosophy, Judas the Galilean (Judas-Zamaris of Gamala) was the author... they have an inviolable attachment to liberty ... and do not value dying any kind of death ... nor do they heed the deaths of their relations and friends ... And it was in Florus' time that the nation began to grow with this distemper.[J25](#)

All sort of misfortunes sprang from these men, and the nation was infected with the doctrine to an incredible degree ... one violent war came upon us after another ... and the very Temple of god was burned down ... for Judas (Judas-Zamaris of Gamala) and Zadok who promoted this Galilean Sect among us ... had laid the foundation of our future miseries by this system of philosophy.[J26](#)

Judas-Zamaris of Gamala, the founder of the Galilean Sect, was the father of Jesus of Gamala, and it was the latter whom Josephus was contending with in and around Galilee, and it was the latter who started the Jewish Rebellion. But I have already demonstrated that Jesus of Gamala was

the leader of the 'rebel fishermen' from Galilee, and so he must have been the biblical Jesus, for who else in this era would have been considered a rebel leader of fishermen? Once again we see clear evidence that, far from being a group of nature-loving pacifists, the biblical Jesus and his Sicarii and Zealot disciples actually started the Jewish Rebellion over the imposition of new taxes; which resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem and the entire Jewish nation.

It might be contended that the philosophy of the Galilean Sect, especially that section about not heeding the deaths of family and friends, cannot be equated with Christianity in any way, and so the Galileans cannot be equated with the disciples. Actually, that is not so, for this rather heartless philosophy comes

straight out of the New Testament gospels:

Then someone said to Jesus, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand outside, desiring to speak with you. But Jesus answered and said unto him, 'Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?' And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren![B27](#)

In other words, Jesus was purposefully exclaiming that his Galilean Sect and its political goals were more important than any individual's family. While this sentiment may seem surprising, to those brought up on classical Christian teachings, surely this new interpretation would not extend to allowing the deaths of close family members without compassion? Surely that is not a part of the Christian creed! Surprising as it may seem, this forlorn

hope is also incorrect:

For I (Jesus) have come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. [B28](#)

Yes, that was the doctrine of the biblical Jesus – the survival of the sect came before family and friends, even in death, and so the philosophy of the Galilean Sect does indeed equate to that of the New Testament Jesus.

Cat and mouse

For all his apparent enthusiasm towards his military duties for the Judaeen priesthood, even as a Roman quisling, Saul-Josephus was in a tight spot here. Having seen the might of Rome at first hand while he was in

Rome, he was convinced that any revolt against Rome would be utterly futile, and his constant repetition of this truism convinced many of the people of Galilee that he was actually working for the Romans:

A rumour now spread throughout Galilee that I (Saul-Josephus) was about to betray the country to the Romans, and the feelings of all were roused to demand my punishment.^{J29}

This was probably true; as we have already seen Saul-Josephus may have been a Roman spy and quisling even at this early stage in the Jewish War. But whatever Saul-Josephus' inner thoughts it was the Jerusalem authorities that gave him his authority and salary, not the Romans (although as a spy he may well have been picking up two salaries). It was also the Jerusalem authorities who would have been

shielding Saul-Josephus from any arrest warrants being forwarded to Judaea by Nero. If both of these elements were playing on his mind, then Saul-Josephus would have been a very reluctant Judaeen army commander indeed.

Saul-Josephus began his command by arming local Judaeen militia and reinforcing the walls of all the major cities in Galilee, but one can detect from his speeches that his heart was not in this rebellion whatsoever. The same was true of the Jerusalem authorities, who appear to have been railroaded into a rebellion that they did not want by the propaganda and sedition of the Galilean Sect, who were now in an influential position even within Jerusalem. Faced with the fact that the rebels and many of the common people had already decided

and acted for the rebellion, the authorities may have felt obliged to agree with them or lose their position of authority. After all, a leader with no followers is no longer a leader. In a similar fashion, King Agrippa II, who had been installed as a vassal king to the Romans, continued to openly support the Romans while covertly supporting the rebels of the Galilean Sect.

Some of the towns in Josephus' jurisdiction were pro-Roman, while others were pro-rebellion. Tiberias, for instance, went over to the Romans on several occasions, and invited King Agrippa and a Roman guard to control the city. But the Romans were not yet strong enough in the region to maintain control, and so the town vacillated between revolt and Rome. Josephus' account in *The Jewish War* breaks off

at this point from any of the action and disputes in and around Galilee, and records instead the Roman military build-up. The reason for this shift in emphasis is that most of Josephus' military actions in Galilee were directed against Jesus of Gamala. Since this Jesus was the biblical Jesus, Saul-Josephus was probably wary about too many mentions of this Jesus in a text that would be sold to and read by Roman army commanders who had been on the Judean offensive, and who would have known the characters and chronology of this campaign. Saul-Josephus could no doubt feel the coarse, abrasive hessian rope against his neck and its noose being tightened, every time he mentioned the rebel leader, Jesus, in this text.

For more information on the events in Galilee, we must turn instead

to a much later work of Saul-Josephus, which was written at a time when he felt more secure in his position in Rome (or Jabneh). The later book was entitled *Vita*, or *Life*, and in this text we hear that the city of Sepphoris was paying Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus) a huge sum of money to attack Saul-Josephus. The attack was apparently unsuccessful as Saul-Josephus got wind of their plans, and Jesus was (possibly) arrested. At about the same time, King Agrippa made an exploratory attack on Gamala, perhaps to impress the Romans, but since he was a sympathiser of the rebels this attack came to nothing. Again, a rumour was spread throughout the region that Saul-Josephus was working for the Romans, and the main instigator of this was Jesus of Gamala, who appears to have been at liberty

again. Jesus then tried to gather a crowd in the theatre in Tiberias, to whip up hatred against Saul-Josephus, but the intended victim of this black propaganda appeared at the theater and confounded Jesus with an impassioned speech.

Thwarted by Saul-Josephus' silver tongue, Jesus later sent 600 armed men to destroy Saul-Josephus' hideout. The latter invited his assailants to take some tribute (a bribe) instead, but on receiving a representative of the rebels into his refuge, Saul-Josephus cut off his hands and sent him back outside, complete with hands dangling around his neck. Fearing there may be a large force inside the hideout, the rebels retired empty-handed. Following this bizarre incident, the account then relates the event previously discussed at length,

where Jesus of Gamala burns down the palace of the late Tetrarch Herod Antipas, to prevent Saul-Josephus from seeing the image (mosaic) of the zodiac that was inside.

All of these Keystone Cops capers may seem a trifle unprofessional to modern perceptions; however, both Jesus and Saul-Josephus were not necessarily commanding regular professional troops at this time. Jesus did have regular forces but these were probably employed elsewhere, as already mentioned. Instead, these forces were mostly conscripted farmers and artisans, who would flee at the slightest alarm and refuse to do anything on the Sabbath. In addition, I am sure that these armies would have instantly disbanded when crops needed sowing or reaping and for numerous other reasons, and Saul-Josephus

mentions a number of occasions when he had to send his 'army' to their homes. It was very easy, therefore, for one side or the other to be caught in a vulnerable situation with greatly reduced forces.

One of the side-affects of all this military action is that Saul-Josephus' newly acquired command and authority had gone to his head – 'aggrandizing myself to the pinnacle of glory', as he himself asserts. He also states that he rejected all presents and preserved every woman's honour; a protestation which probably means that in reality he took bribes by the score and women captives as trophy playthings.

Seeing this egotism and corruption as a weakness in his armour, two of Saul-Josephus' adversaries, Simon and John, made an application to the Jerusalem priesthood

that they should clip this young buck's wings (Saul-Josephus was 29 when he was appointed commander). They warned the authorities that Saul-Josephus may grow so powerful that he might march on Jerusalem; which was no doubt another allusion to the rumour that he was actually working for the Romans. Alarmed by this, High Priest Ananus-Matthias tried to entice Saul-Josephus to come to Jerusalem, where the authorities could detain him, but, having got wind of these plans, he refused to be drawn. The priesthood then paid John and Jesus of Gamala 40,000 pieces of silver in order to capture or destroy Saul-Josephus. As one can see, Jesus of Gamala was doing quite well from all of this unrest, with towns and cities all across the land paying him for protection – his mounted 'Babylonian Jew' archers

being one of the few professional forces in the land.

Warned of this potential attack on his position, Saul-Josephus then had his miraculous dream where an apparition of a man appeared before him. Even though he was not on a road to Damascus, this vision is a clear counterpart of Saul-Josephus's (Saul's) vision of Jesus:

Wonderful was the dream I saw that very night ... it seemed to me that a certain person stood by me and said: 'O Josephus, cease from your sorrow of heart, let go all fear. For that which grieves you now will promote you to greatness ... remember that you are to fight with (alongside) the Romans.'^{J30}

Note how Saul-Josephus says that this vision was of a 'certain man'. Since he normally gives the names of every infantryman or legionnaire, prostitute or queen, the deliberate lack of a name

at this point in the text is highly suspicious. This convenient vision may also be another confirmation that Saul-Josephus was a Roman spy all along, and so this vision may have simply been a literary excuse for Saul-Josephus turning against his countrymen and fighting alongside the Romans.

Jotapata

These convoluted allegiances and disputes in Galilee represent Saul-Josephus' own account of his activities during the eve of the Jewish War. He had been the Judaeen army commander in charge of Galilee and Gamala and so naturally he had come into conflict with Jesus of Gamala. But all this turmoil in the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire was hardly going to go

unnoticed by the world's superpower, who thought that they owned this patch of real-estate. It had *not* gone unnoticed, of course, but perhaps any potential response had been delayed due to this very period also witnessing the final death throws of Nero's mad reign. Nero was in Greece at the time, desperately trying to prove how great an artist he was, so the state was potentially rudderless.

The death of Nero still lay some ten months in the future at this point; but despite the lack of any real leadership from the Emperor, the civil administrators of the Empire toiled on and a new commander was eventually sent out to the Near East – Titus Flavius Vespasianus (Vespasian), backed up by his able son, Titus Flavius Vespasianus (Titus).^{*1} Gathering his forces, comprising three

crack legions and assorted other troops from the Levant, Vespasian marched an army some 60,000 strong through northern Galilee, picking off the odd village and town here and there. There was no real opposition at this point, and some of the more Hellenised towns in the north opened their gates and welcomed Vespasian in as a saviour. Then, Vespasian set his sights on Saul-Josephus, who had retreated to the city of Jotapata. Josephus indicates that this Roman strategy was due to his being so important, and in some senses this is true (and not simply because he was a spy). Saul-Josephus was the Judaeen army commander of Galilee and he would have had the largest military forces in the region, so he could not be bypassed and allowed to bite Vespasian in the rear. Saul-Josephus and his small army had to be

dealt with.

The siege of Jotapata lasted forty-seven days and towards the very end, Saul-Josephus told his men to hold firm while he went to Jerusalem to beg for reinforcements. At this sincerely delivered speech the people of Jotapata smelled a rat, the kind of rat that seeks to desert a sinking ship. They were right, of course, for Saul-Josephus wanted to save his own skin; but this was not simply the impression of rational people in a besieged city, it was a blatant admission by the man himself!

Hereupon Josephus avoided letting them know that he was to go away to provide for his own safety, but told them that he would go out of the city for their sakes.[J31](#)

The brazen effrontery of the man is quite astounding. Here is a traitor who

not only schemes and manipulates to provide for his own safety, at the expense of others, but brags about it too. We shall see more of this dubious character-trait shortly.

Finally, the superior Roman forces outside the city prevailed; not by breaking the city wall, although they had tried, but by building a ramp that went up and over it. Surging up and over the wall during the small hours of the morning, the defenders were taken by complete surprise and cut down where they slumbered. Fanning out across the town, maintaining as much silence as possible, they caught many defenders in their beds and the attack rapidly turned into a massacre. But mercy was not an option here, for the Judaeian resistance had been stiff and many a Roman had already been killed, so the attackers were not in a mood for

taking prisoners. When the smoking ruins of the town fell silent later that same day, and the Romans paraded their troops in the central square, it was discovered that only one soldier was missing. But of the defenders of the town, only twelve hundred out of forty thousand were taken alive; such were the fortunes of war in this era.^{J32}

The Romans did not manage to capture or kill everyone, of course, and a number of the defenders hid in cellars, wells, dungeons or any other nook or cranny they could find, in order to evade the blood-lust of the attackers. Saul-Josephus was one of those fortunate ones who had escaped the Roman *gladius* (their short swords) as he had hidden, with about forty other men, in a cellar of some sort. They remained holed-up in this prison for three whole days, while the

Romans searched the ruins of the city up above. Saul-Josephus says the Romans were specifically searching for him, which is entirely possible if he was both the commander of the Jewish defenders and also a Roman spy.

Their hiding-place was finally discovered after a woman, who had been among their number, was apprehended by the Romans (probably while looking for food or water) and gave away the location of the cellar. Vespasian and Titus sent word to Saul-Josephus that if he gave himself up his life would be spared, but it is not clear if a similar offer was made to all the other men in the cellar. The entreaties by the Romans were quite specific here, and Josephus was being hailed like an old friend. Indeed, Nicanor, one of the messengers, *was* an old

friend of Saul-Josephus:

The Romans searched for Josephus ... because it was their commander's (Vespasian's) express wish, since the war would be virtually over once Josephus was in their hands.

Vespasian sent two tribunes ... to offer Josephus safe conduct. When they arrived they gave him a warm invitation and a guarantee of safety.^{J33}

Even discounting the usual embellishments and exaggerations that Saul-Josephus places within his accounts, it does appear that he was well known to the Romans. This, taken together with the evidence earlier in this chapter, again strongly suggests that Saul-Josephus had been working for the Romans as a spy in the Judean camp. Safe conduct or not, Saul-Josephus was in a dank, stinking dungeon with forty of his fellow

soldiers and could not just surrender to Nicanor, because his men would have slit his throat if he had made a move towards the exit.

Faced with total opposition to any thoughts of surrender, Josephus gave his men a bizarre speech, in which he outlined the many reasons why they should all just give themselves up. This long and complex dialogue contains a number of memorable lines, including:

I am told that it is glorious to die in war ... but if I am shrinking from Roman swords, I fully deserve to die by my own hand; but if they are disposed to spare the enemy, how much more justified should we be in sparing ourselves. It would be absurd to do to ourselves what we are fighting to prevent their doing to us!

The man who doesn't want to die when he should is no more cowardly than the man who does want to die when he should not.

(If we give ourselves up) I pray that the Romans may prove to be traitors: if after giving me their word they put me to death, I die happy, finding in the broken faith of such liars a consolation greater than victory itself.^{J34}

This is the mercenary, self-serving, egotistical Saul-Josephus at his very best; eloquent and resourceful, but only interested in the preservation of number one – himself. However, faced with armed subordinates who were on the verge of lynching their commanding officer, Josephus was left with few options other than organising a mass suicide. But there was just a chance that he might outwit his angry but dim-witted men and thereby once more outwit fate, by the judicious use of a lottery. It is not entirely certain what kind of lottery Saul-Josephus arranged for his men, but it may have been as simple as tossing a (double-headed)

coin:

In this predicament his resourcefulness did not fail him. Putting his trust in divine protection he staked his life on one last throw.

Whoever draws the first lot shall be dispatched by the number two and so on down the whole line as luck decides ... Without hesitation each man in turn offered his throat for the next to cut ... But Josephus – shall we put it down to divine providence or just to luck – was finally left with one other man.[J35](#)

This was Saul-Josephus at his finest, and one can imagine the Grim Reaper standing next to him, with fingers drumming repeatedly on his scythe and getting very frustrated at not being able to do his job.

The fact that Josephus had actually devised a ruse to ensure that he was the last survivor is fairly obvious, and so there was neither divine providence nor luck involved in

his managing to win each and every stage of the lottery. This is not simply a supposition, for Saul-Josephus was far too arrogant and conceited to need mere suppositions. No, he himself made the truth abundantly clear in the Slavonic version of *The Jewish War*, an edition that is thought to be much closer to the original manuscript. The Slavonic version of this same paragraph reads:

Let he that comes last (in the lottery) be killed by the second. And when he had thus spoken, he counted the numbers with cunning and thereby misled them all.^{J36}

It is therefore of no great surprise that Josephus was one of only two survivors from this stinking dungeon of death, for he had fixed the result of the lottery by some devious means or other. Perhaps it was a double-headed

coin, or perhaps it was something as simple as conducting the lottery himself. For if the commanding officer always tossed the coin to choose between two of his men, then the commanding officer was not a part of the lottery and was bound to be the last one standing. If this was the successful ploy it is difficult to see how Saul-Josephus could prevent himself giving the game away by laughing.

Having at last surrendered and been taken to see Vespasian and Titus, Saul-Josephus was given a private audience with the Roman commanders. Again we see evidence that Saul-Josephus may have been a Roman spy during the whole of this period, for why else should Vespasian and Titus' discussions with Saul-Josephus have been kept so secret?^{J37} During this meeting, Saul-Josephus makes yet

another grovelling speech, during which he calls Vespasian 'caesar'. Now this was a risky strategy, for Nero was still the emperor at the time and so this speech was treasonous for Vespasian to even listen to; but Saul-Josephus quickly explained that he was making a prophesy from god that Vespasian would be the next emperor of Rome:

Thou, O Vespasian are caesar and emperor, you and your son (Titus). Bind me now still tighter and keep me for yourself, for you, O caesar, are not only lord over me, but over the land and sea and all mankind.[J38](#)

Ingratiating is not the word for this grovelling display and we can imagine Saul-Josephus down on his knees, kissing the feet of Vespasian to save his skin. We have no way of telling if Saul-Josephus made this prediction at the time he indicates or not, or whether

it was added retrospectively, but this prediction was a component of the well-known Star Prophecy and so it is likely that it was delivered to Vespasian at this time.*² Besides, if Saul-Josephus' publisher-friend, Epaphroditus, had given him an indication that he was about to assassinate Nero, then Saul-Josephus' prediction was almost a surefire winner.

One good reason for Vespasian sparing Saul-Josephus' life was that the Roman army was now closing in on Jerusalem and Vespasian would need as much information on the city, its people and their tactics as possible. Jerusalem was nigh-on an impregnable fortress, and so this was going to be no easy siege. However, much of this material has already been covered in the book *Jesus*, so I propose to move

on now to the end of the siege of Jerusalem. All readers need to understand about this epic siege is that Saul-Josephus was actively working for the Romans as their chief propagandist, who toured the city walls attempting to get the citizens to surrender. Many an eloquent speech was made, describing the hopelessness of their situation, and many a rock was thrown in reply.

Kidron Valley

The city of Jerusalem was not simply a political and theological capital of Judaeo-Israel, it was also a formidable fortress. It was built upon the summits of two hills and much of the perimeter was protected with deep ravines with thick, megalithic walls that rose up like cliff faces. There were many

subdivisions of the city and so in places the attackers would have to scale three sets of walls before reaching the Temple Mount. Conversely, the eastern edge of the Temple Mount had just one wall, but this was an almost impregnable cliff face made of megalithic blocks that rose some thirty meters over the steep Kidron Valley.

For the advancing Roman legions, this was not going to be the same as attacking the small towns of Galilee. There was to be no sudden rush upon such a fortress, so the build-up of Titus' forces and the preparations of the area were slow and methodical. The main weapon in this siege, apart from the usual battering rams, crossbows, ballistas and undermining tunnels, was to be the prevention of provisions entering the city and the

resulting starvation of the population. To prevent supplies getting in, a curtain wall was built around the town and guarded 24 hours a day.

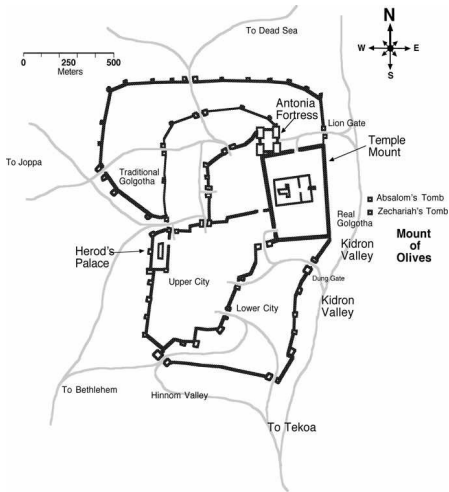


Fig 9.4 The City of Jerusalem.

Before the Roman legions had thrown so much as a stone at the great walls of Jerusalem, the Empire had problems of its own. Nero – the unstable emperor

who had killed his mother, kicked his wife to death and fallen in love with Sporus, a young man who he thought looked like his late wife – was fast running out of support and friends, and was faced with certain death or suicide. He chose the latter, but got his scribe and secretary, Epaphroditus, to assist him. Epaphroditus was, of course, Saul-Josephus' close friend and 'publisher', and so for the more conspiratorially minded this may even have been a brilliantly engineered coup against the Roman establishment, conceived and calculated by Saul-Josephus himself.

Nero's death caused a power vacuum in Rome that lasted over a year, while three emperors came and went in quick succession. They were Galba, Otho and Vitellius, and none wore the imperial purple for more than

six months. This civil strife halted military operations in Judaea, while Vespasian waited for new commands, but the civil war in the city of Jerusalem continued unabated, with faction fighting faction for control of the city. Vespasian looked on, bemused, and commenting that the Jews were doing his job for him.

Among the hundreds of thousands, or even millions, of people caught up in this great civil war were the parents of Saul-Josephus, and he says of them (in the third person):

They also kept Josephus' father (and mother) in prison, and an edict forbade anyone in the city to associate with him ... Any who consorted with him were executed without trial.[J40](#)

This was during the siege of Jerusalem and Saul-Josephus' parents and all their maids and servants had been

placed in jail, and this again demonstrates the position of authority and power that Saul-Josephus' family had in Judaea. His father was so important and so anti the rebellion against Rome that he had been imprisoned along with a great number of maids and servants. This is the kind of wealth, power and influence that Saul-Josephus' parents had and this again demonstrates that all of these characters were powerful aristocrats involved in a titanic power struggle.

After the city of Jerusalem had fallen into Roman hands, there were just a few pockets of resistance to deal with. It was at this point in time that Saul-Josephus was despatched with a thousand Roman cavalry to Tekoa, just to the south of Jerusalem, to deal with the rebels in this stronghold. Following the defenders' rapid capitulation, he

made his way back to the city along the Kidron Valley, which winds its way to the east of the Temple Mount and up to the Lion Gate entrance to the city fortress. The deep valley afforded some respite from the heat, while the tombs and mausoleums that line its banks and the Mount of Olives above, give it a distinctly eerie or even a sinister atmosphere. But, as they rounded a bend, the valley filled with even greater menace, as a line of crosses came into view. There, Saul-Joseph discovered his old adversary (Jesus of Gamala) being crucified with two of his brethren or compatriots, one on either side, and a small cluster of women lamenting at their feet.*³

At his approach the lamenting abruptly ceased and the women fell upon Saul-Joseph(us) of Arimathaea and begged him to save Jesus from the

cross, because they knew that he was the only Jew who could speak to the Roman governor on their behalf (the governor was actually Titus, not Pilate). Saul-Josephus was moved to petition Titus for Jesus' life, not so much through compassion or magnanimity but more through the satisfaction and elation at holding the life of his adversary in his hands and perhaps even the propaganda value that a living Jesus might command. With the request granted, Jesus and his two companions were taken down from the cross and laid in a nearby rock-tomb, which was cool and clean, and given medical attention. However, only Jesus survived his ordeal, while his two compatriots both succumbed to their wounds.

This, then, was the true life and times of the egocentric, vainglorious

Saul-Josephus (St Paul). And while this new and greatly revised narrative may generate a New Testament chronology that appears to be forty years too late, I am not the only author to have had difficulties with the orthodox biblical chronology. The authors of the Grail legends had a similar problem with the dating of the crucifixion and, incongruously, they solved this intractable problem by making Saul-Joseph(us) of Arimathaea fall asleep for forty years, but more on this later.

Summary

Chronology of the life of Saul-Josephus.

Year	Event
37	Birth
51	<i>Bar mitsvah</i> . Amazes priests with his knowledge.
53	First missionary tour with brother Matthias Barnabas (Bannus).
53	Asks James for rules of simplified Judaism for Gentiles.
54	Splits with brother, Matthias Barnabas.
54	Second missionary tour with Silas, now teaching Simple Judaism.
56	Returns to Jerusalem.
56	Causes minor riot in Temple, because of Simple Judaism's teachings and bringing Gentiles onto the Temple Mount.
56	Jailed in Jerusalem.
57	Trial before Felix and Drusilla.

- 59 Trial before Festus.
- 61 Trial before Agrippa II and Berenice.
- 62 Sent to Rome with priests in the Temple
Wall Affair.
- 62 Shipwrecked on Malta.
- 63 Arrives in Rome.
- 63 Meets and gets involved with Poppaea,
Nero's errant wife.
- 65 Hastily returns to Jerusalem.
- 65 Attempts to become a disciple (or high
priest), but brother Matthias
Barnabas wins.
- 66 Instigates riot that caused the death of
James (this may be AD 62).
- 66 As an alternative to high priest, becomes
army commander of Galilee and
Gamala.
- 67 Flash of inspiration.
- 67 Surrenders to Vespasian.
- 70 Siege of Jerusalem. Tries to get Jews to
surrender. Jerusalem falls.
- 70 Discovers Jesus being crucified, petitions
for his release.
- 71 Commandeers Jabneh, the Judaic
university and Sanhedrin.
- 72 Becomes *de facto* high priest of all
Judaea.
- 74 Writes *Jewish War*.

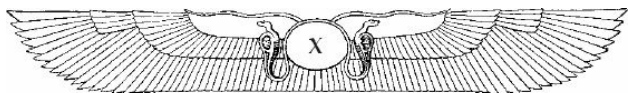
- 80 Writes *Antiquities of the Jews*.
- 88 Writes Talmud, Luke and Acts of the Apostles.
- 94 Writes *Life* and *Against Apion*.
- 95 Flees to Britain to escape purges by Emperor Domitian.
- 96 Arrives in England as Joseph(us) of Arimathaea.

*1 Father and son had the same names, and so the English preference for ‘Vespasian’ and ‘Titus’ clarifies the situation.

*2 The Talmud’s version of these events is located at the siege of Jerusalem, rather than the siege of Jotapata. But this is impossible, for in the Talmud’s account Vespasian is still protesting that he is not king (emperor), but Vespasian was emperor at this time so these events must have taken place earlier – at Jotapata. This alteration was probably devised in order to physically separate the two characters who surrendered to Vespasian. The problem being that the character in the Talmud’s version went on to become the *de facto* high priest of all Judaea after the fall of Jerusalem, so a link to Saul-Josephus would be potentially disastrous for Judaism!

*3 The text refers to the three ‘leaders of the rebellion’, rather than Jesus of Gamala in person, but

this is exactly what Josephus says Jesus of Gamala was - the leader of the Jewish Revolt.



Saul-Josephus and Modern Judaism

It is entirely possible that the Judaic Talmud holds a more accurate account of Saul-Josephus' 'defection' to the Romans. But in preserving this record, the Talmud also allows us a glimpse at a very different aspect of Saul-Josephus' life — a truth that Saul-Josephus (St Paul) did not want the world to know. For, incredible as it

may seem, Saul-Josephus did not just create Christianity as we know it today, he created modern Judaism too. This possibility, as readers might appreciate, doubles the social influence that Saul-Josephus may have had upon the last two millennia of Western history. So what is the Jewish Talmud, and why should we pay any heed to what it has to say?

The Talmud is primarily a book of Judaic law, ethics and customs and, like the law of most Western nations, much of this voluminous work was created through a distillation of historical and contemporary precedents. The only real difference here is that many of these precedents come from the study of verses from the Tanakh (the Old Testament). Just as a modern lawyer might quote a particular court case from the previous

decade that set a legal precedent, so the Talmud will quote the precedents that were set by the Tanakh hundreds of years ago, or by previous high priests and rabbis in the previous decades. Many of the rabbis that the Talmud quotes from actually lived in the first century AD, and it is this latter element of the Talmudic record that is of great interest to us because it sometimes contains ‘hidden’ references to the characters of the New Testament.^{T1}

The only problem with historical Talmudic law is that much of it is supremely tedious and the rest is either written in code, to cover up the characters involved, or comprises witty and carping comments about events of the day. Often, historical characters and incidents are used to describe contemporary events, thereby concealing the true nature of the event

and the real characters involved. Perhaps the best description of some of these Talmudic commentaries is that they represent the priestly equivalent of Private Eye or Punch Magazine (both satirical magazines in the UK). This is certainly true when we read that Jesus had sex with an ass, or used his penis to perform magic tricks, although there was often a more serious intent behind this bawdy humour.^{T2}

A carping comment that is typical of the cryptic and salacious humour that makes up much of the Talmud, and a paragraph which may well have biblical origins, is of a carpenter who divorced his wife, but sadly ended up as a servant of his ex-wife and her new husband. Some rabbis saw this as the ex-husband's downfall, while 'some said that (the

situation) became two wicks in one lamp'.^{T3} The humour here needs no elucidation, but the underlying historical circumstances that prompted this comment may, which is a perennial problem when reading the Talmud. No doubt there was a serious reason for this jocular obfuscation, for the literary wits of the Temple priesthood did not want to face the sharp *gladius* of the Emperor's legions; however, this does make the decipherment and interpretation of Talmudic history somewhat tricky.

The Talmud was originally an oral work, but it was eventually recorded in written form by rabbis of the post-Second Temple period (after the fall of Jerusalem). This great task was primarily carried out by Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai – an important priest whom we shall meet again very

shortly.

Contrary to the typical Christian assertion that Jesus and the disciples lived in a pre-literate era – and this being the reason why there is no contemporary mention of Jesus – much of the great corpus of law in the Talmud was written during the late first century AD (as were the vast tomes written by Saul-Josephus and the copious scribblings of the Essene sect and Jesus-Justus of Tiberias). This was most certainly a highly literate era, with plenty of willing scribes and chroniclers who were more than happy to record their view of contemporary events. The only problem we have is one of document survival, and unfortunately the only documents that did survive have all been filtered through the offices of Saul-Josephus and the Catholic Church.

Capture and surrender

Saul-Josephus' account of his defection to the Romans is one of heroism at the siege of Jotapata, of hiding in a cave for three days and the stoic martyrdom of the Jewish rebels – even if Saul-Josephus tricked his comrades to their deaths. Had we only had Saul-Josephus' account of these events, this would be the only way in which we could ever interpret these events. History to us would be two-dimensional, lacking any depth in either veracity or verifiability. However, there may be an alternative record of this event that can change our perception.

On scanning the tedious texts of the Talmud, a particular paragraph stood out as being rather familiar. This folio was concerned with the weeks

just before the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, and describes Vespasian sitting in his tent outside the city (this character may well be Titus, for Vespasian and Titus shared the same names). In the folio, there is an account of someone called Johanan ben Zakkai, a senior figure in Jerusalem politics, who wanted to escape from the besieged city of Jerusalem, but the Romans had sealed off all the exits and surrounded the city. So Johanan's nephew, Abba Sikkra, devised a cunning plan:

Pretend to be ill, and let everyone come to inquire about you. Bring something evil smelling and put it by you so that they will say you are dead. ... (two rabbis) carried the bier (coffin) ... when they reached the door (to the city), some men wanted to put a lance through the bier. He said to them: Shall [the Romans] say they have pierced their Master?

T4

Actually, this cunning plan sounds like

something that Baldrick ^{*1} would have dreamed up, as it is pure slapstick. Anyway, it is supposed to have worked and the Master, a term which demonstrated how important Johanan was, escaped from the city in a coffin. The potential piercing of this escapee called the 'Master' has obvious biblical parallels. However, the reason I think that this story is connected to the escape of Saul-Josephus is contained in the account of Johanan ben Zakkai reaching Vespasian (or Titus):

When (Johanan) reached Vespasian (or Titus) he said, Peace to you, O king, peace to you, O king (emperor). Vespasian said: Your life is forfeit on two counts, one because I am not a king and you call me king, and again, if I am a king, why did you not come to me before now?

Johanan replied: As for your saying that you are not a king, in truth you are a king since if you were not a king Jerusalem would not be delivered into your hand, as it is written, 'And

Lebanon (a name for the Temple of Jerusalem) shall fall by a king.'^{T5}

Compare this with Saul-Josephus' account of his surrender, where he says:

Thou, O Vespasian ... I come to thee as a messenger of greater tidings. Thou, O Vespasian, art Caesar and emperor (king), thou, and this thy son. Bind me now still faster, and keep me for thyself, for thou, O Caesar, are not only lord over me, but over the land and the sea, and all mankind ... When he had said this, Vespasian at present did not believe him, but supposed that Josephus said this as a cunning trick, in order to his own preservation.

... there was an ambiguous oracle in their sacred writings, (saying that) about that time, one from their country should become king of the whole world.^{J6}

As Professor Eisenman points out, both of these 'captives' are conferring the Judaic Star Prophecy upon Vespasian:

predicting that Vespasian would become emperor of Rome.⁷ These texts are also similar in that Vespasian is finally persuaded to spare the captive (be it either Johanan or Josephus), because they foretold the future through this Star Prophecy. Note, however, the strangely familiar tone of Vespasian, in asking Johanan, ‘why did you not come earlier?’ Clearly, Vespasian was expecting Johanan to come to him and was somewhat peeved that he had not made more of an effort to do so. Thus it is possible that Johanan was working for Vespasian, as a spy of some kind, just as I have suspected for Saul-Josephus.

Later, the Talmud goes on to say that when Vespasian (or Titus) left Judaea, he granted Johanan ben Zakkai a final request:

Vespasian said; I am now going, and will send

someone to take my place. You can, however, make a request of me and I will grant it. He said to him: Give me Jabneh and its wise men, and the family chain of Rabbi Gamaliel, and physicians to heal Rabbi Zadok (Rabbi Justus).^{T8}

In a remarkably similar fashion, Saul-Josephus is also offered a final request by Titus, and he asks for:

I saw many captives crucified, and remembered three of them as my former acquaintance. I was very sorry at this in my mind, and went with tears in my eyes to Titus, and told him of them; so he immediately commanded them to be taken down, and to have the greatest care taken of them, in order to their recovery; yet two of them died under the physician's hands, while the third recovered.^{J9}

Both Johanan and Saul-Josephus surrender to Vespasian during a siege; both prophesy that Vespasian will become emperor; both have their lives spared; both are granted requests for

the assistance they have given; both ask for land (as we shall see); and both ask for the lives of wounded close companions or family, for whom physicians are required. These are incredible similarities, so were these two separate accounts a record of the same event? Was Johanan actually Saul-Josephus?

As we have already seen, it is highly likely that this acquaintance of Saul-Josephus who survived this crucifixion was actually the biblical Jesus, and so Saul-Josephus was asking Titus (Vespasian) for Jesus to be spared and for a physician to be brought to heal his wounds. In a remarkably similar fashion, the Talmud says that Johanan ben Zakkai requested a physician for Rabbi Zadok. So was this Zadok the same character that Saul-Josephus saved from the cross?

Was Rabbi Zadok actually Jesus?

The Talmud's authors recorded their observations with a dry wit and plenty of obfuscation, presumably to prevent their necks from being elongated by their many enemies, and this sentence is no exception to this rule. As we saw previously, the Hebrew name 'Zadok' צדוק can be translated into Greco-Latin as 'Justus', and so Johanan ben Zakkai was requesting that Rabbi Justus be given medical attention. However, we have already seen, and will again see in the next chapter, that Jesus was called Jesus-Justus. But, Jesus was also a rabbi, and so his full title was Rabbi Jesus-Justus. Thus Johanan was asking for a physician to heal the wounds of Rabbi (Jesus) Justus, while Saul-Josephus was also asking for a physician to heal the wounds of Rabbi

Jesus-Justus.

Johanan ben Zakkai was also requesting that the family of Gamaliel (Gamala) be spared, which is not so surprising, given that Saul-Josephus was brought up 'at the feet of Gamaliel', as we saw earlier. But I have already demonstrated, in previous chapters, that the Gamaliels were not only important members of Judaeen aristocracy who supported the Galilean Sect, they were actually the family of the biblical Jesus (Jesus of Gamala). If Johanan was asking for the family of Gamaliel (Gamala) to be saved, then this surely means that many of the family of Jesus survived the fall of Jerusalem; although it is clear from the writings of Eusebius that there were later purges against this same family that may well have terminated many of its branches.¹⁰

More important, perhaps, is the fact that these two accounts just have to be recording the same event. The many equivalences between these two accounts would strongly suggest that the character in the Talmud called Johanan be Zakkai is actually a reference to the character we know as Saul-Josephus. This is awkward, in some respects, as it may seem to readers that every character I come across in these texts is always Saul-Josephus, a proposition which might seem unlikely. However, please bear in mind that multiple appellations are not uncommon in the New Testament, with Judas Iscariot, for instance, having four other names. He was called Judas Iscariot, Labbaius, Thaddaeus, Didymus and Thomas, and these are simply his names in the gospels!

In addition, Saul-Josephus may well have controlled all the literary output in Judaeo-Israel after the fall of Jerusalem, through his 'publishing house', and so he may well appear in differing texts under alternative pseudonyms. A senior figure in the Talmud, for instance, may not want to be equated with a senior figure in the Church of Simple Judaism; and the easiest way to ensure that that never happens is to use alternative names.

Confirmation of this bizarre state of affairs, that Johanan was in fact Saul-Josephus, can be glimpsed in many locations, and the first of these is probably Johanan's surrender to Vespasian. This account from the Talmud was slightly odd, as it suggested that Johanan surrendered at the siege of Jerusalem, instead of Jotapata. However, Johanan then

proceeded to give the Star Prophecy to Vespasian, and yet this is impossible, for Vespasian was already nominally emperor by the time the siege of Jerusalem began. It would have made no sense to give this prophecy to someone who was already emperor (although it is true that Vespasian had not yet formally accepted the honour in Rome). Thus it is reasonably certain that this surrender of Johanan ben Zakkai to Vespasian was the same event as the surrender of Saul-Josephus to Vespasian, and it actually occurred nearly three years previously at the siege of Jotapata.

We can also see further equivalences between these 'two' characters in some of the other pronouncements that Johanan made. Firstly, the Talmud records the following:

Rabbi Simeon ben Lakish said: Woe unto 'him who makes himself alive by the name of god' (Jesus). Rabbi Johanan (ben Zakkai) said: Woe to the nation that attempting to hinder the Holy One, when he accomplishes the redemption of his children: who would throw his garment between a lion (god) and a lioness (Mary) when these are copulating!^{T12}

Talmudic texts are infuriatingly confusing at times, so some explanation is necessary. This extract says that Rabbi Lakish condemns 'the one who resurrects himself by the name of god'. This is actually a coded reference to Jesus, and the Talmudic notes confirm this. However, Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai defends Jesus in strident terms – even by invoking the imagery of god (the lion) having sex with a woman of the tribe of Judah (Mary the Virgin, the lioness) and asking the assembled priests, 'who wants to stop god fornicating!' We

know that this was a reference to Mary the Virgin because divine copulation is, after all, the central Christian message (and again the Talmudic notes confirm this interpretation). God had devised a method of having some good old-fashioned rumpy-pumpy with Mary the Virgin, and got her pregnant (however self-contradictory this absurd doctrine may seem).

But here is Johanan ben Zakkai, a very senior Jewish rabbi – in fact, the most senior Jewish rabbi of his day – and he is defending the Christian teaching that god had sex with a woman of the line of Judah (Mary); that Jesus was therefore the son of god; and that Jesus rose on the third day (made himself alive)! But these doctrines are contrary to all Judaic teaching, so what kind of senior rabbi would be making such statements and

supporting these heretical beliefs? In other words, who was Johanan ben Zakkai? The answer is Saul-Josephus, for he made exactly the same kind of declaration himself:

When they saw (Saul-Josephus) in the temple, they stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him. Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man (Saul-Josephus) who teaches all men everywhere against the people, against the law, and against this Temple.[B13](#)

Undoubtedly, Johanan ben Zakkai had the same belief system and was indulging in the same contentious debates as was Saul-Josephus. It was also Johanan ben Zakkai who made the derogatory remarks about Mary Magdalene being ‘the descendant of princes and governors who played the whore with carpenters’, a comment which displays an intimate knowledge of New Testament material (see

Cleopatra for further details).^{T14} So, from all these similarities, it does seem likely that Johanan ben Zakkai and Saul-Josephus were actually one and the same the same person.

But there is more. The second request that Johanan made of Vespasian was that he be given Jabneh and its wise men. (Later in the Talmud, carping rabbis asked why, if Johanan was so clever, did he not ask for Jerusalem to be spared instead of just Jabneh.) Now Jabneh was a Judaic academy or university for the most eminent Jewish scholars, the Oxford or Harvard of first century Judaea, and Johanan ben Zakkai took it for his own and transformed it into a center for Judaic studies. It was in that same center of learning that Johanan:

... never spoke an idle word; he did not go four yards without reflecting on the Torah ...

and no one ever found him engaged in anything but study.^{T15}

A description which is all very reminiscent of Saul-Josephus. But Jabneh was not simply a center of learning, for it is said that it eventually became the center for Judaic administration, religious observance and law (the Sanhedrin); while Johanan ben Zakkai himself became the *de facto* high priest and leader of the Jewish people in the Levant. Thus Johanan became, as I said before, the most important Jew in the whole of the Roman empire; while Johanan's university at Jabneh – which is identified today with the town of Yavne (Jabne) just to the south of Tel Aviv – became the new Jerusalem for the Jewish people, who were forbidden by Roman law from travelling within sight of the destroyed

city of Jerusalem.¹⁶

What we have here, of course, is not simply the life and times of Johanan ben Zakkai, but also a complete description of the life of Saul-Josephus Flavius. It was Saul-Josephus who immersed himself in Jewish customs and history and it was Saul-Josephus who set up, together with his good friend Epaphroditus, a scriptorium (or 'publishing house') for the production of his great works on Jewish history. The only discrepancy between this new scenario and my previous assertions about Saul-Josephus (in the book *Jesus, Last of the Pharaohs*) is one of scale. Previously, I was thinking in terms of an upstairs room with twenty or so scribes and a desperately overworked Saul-Josephus in one corner, tirelessly composing his great work. This is the

Saul-Josephus portrayed in figure 10.1 and in the introduction to this book.

But hold on one minute. This was not a perennially poverty-stricken historian with a harebrained desire for self-publishing, this was Saul-Josephus, the cunning, devious, wealthy aristocratic priest and army commander who had ‘single-handedly’ won the Jewish War and was now a royal client in receipt of Emperor Vespasian’s grateful largesse. Remember, it may well have been Saul-Josephus, working as Vespasian’s undercover spy and spin-meister, who directed the successful course of the Jerusalem campaign, and it may well have been Saul-Josephus who likewise influenced the Roman proletariat towards supporting Vespasian as emperor with his promotion of the Star Prophecy.

The Flavians may well have been very appreciative of Saul-Josephus' efforts, and so his settlement could easily have included an entire university. After all, this university was not Vespasian's personal property, nor did it represent a drain on the precious funds in the Roman coffers (which were precariously low at that time); it was simply a Judaeian town and academy that Vespasian or Titus could allocate to Saul-Josephus with the flick of a quill and an impression of the imperial seal on a document. 'You want a university, Saul-Josephus? Ok, it's done. What next?'

In fact, this is more or less what Saul-Josephus himself says. He remarks that he was given lands in Judaea, by Titus, but I had rashly interpreted this as meaning 'farm land'. What the text actually says is:

Titus, assuming that the lands I held in Jerusalem would be unprofitable to me because of the Roman garrison there, gave me another parcel of land in the plain.^{J17}

Now if one travels from Jerusalem and down onto the plain, we arrive at Jabneh; for it is almost due west of Jerusalem, just inland from the sea. Now there was quite possibly a great deal of profitable farmland in this region, but what I had not previously realised is that there was also a university there, a center of Judaic study.

This is who Saul-Josephus was – he was no farmer in need of a vineyard or two, he was a priest, an aristocrat, a historian, a man with a passion for Judaeian history. Josephus did not need a vineyard and so he asked Titus for a university instead, in order to pursue his passion for religion

and history. The only vineyard at Jabneh was the Sanhedrin, which was called the 'vineyard' because all the priestly judges sat in rows like vines in the fields. (After the fall of Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin, or parliament, was moved to Jabneh. Thus Saul-Josephus-Johanan was not only in control of Jewish history, but of the Jewish priestly-government too!)



Fig 10.1 Saul-Josephus at work in his university at Jabneh, Valentin de Boulogne.

In other words, the scribal facility that produced Josephus' *Jewish War* and eventually his *Antiquities*, was the university and cultural center of Judaism at Jabneh. And while he had the time and the conscripted workforce at his disposal, Saul-Josephus-Johanan also decided to commit the oral Talmud to parchment for the first time. Thus our intrepid historian not only created Simple Judaism (Christianity) he was also in the process of creating and compiling the Judaic Talmud too. In fact, upon a quick scan of the entire Talmud, a significant proportion of it concerns the sayings and deeds of Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai.

Another text that probably came from Saul-Josephus' university at Jabneh was an odd text known as the Epistle to Diognetus. It was appended to the works of Justin the Martyr, but

appears to be in a different style. The author says that he is:

An instructor of the Gentiles now, although I was a pupil of the apostles once ... I now minister to students of the truth.¹⁸

This all sounds rather like Saul-Josephus, the apostle of the Galileans who now taught the Gentiles instead. The reference to ‘students of the truth’ is also telling, because Saul-Josephus was always rather sensitive about being called the ‘liar’. The pertinent point in this text is that the author says:

The Jews may claim to be devotees of one god ... but in so far as they do him service with rites similar to those of the heathen, they are in error. For if the Greeks must stand convicted of absurdity by the offerings they make to senseless and dumb idols, the Jews ought to realise that it shows equal absurdity to think of god in need of such things.¹⁹

The author then goes on to ridicule the absurdities of the Jewish Sabbath laws and the stupidity of circumcision, all of which is rather Saul-Josephian in both style and content, for Saul-Josephus despised circumcision and flouted the Sabbath.

However, the important point to note here is that the author of this text – who was most certainly a confirmed Simple Judaist and possibly Saul-Josephus himself – also severely criticises the traditional Jewish animal offerings that were made to their god. But he was not the only person to do so. When Jesus strode confidently into the Temple in John 2:15, he made a whip from small cords and drove the money changers and the sellers of oxen and sheep for sacrifice out of the Temple. Jesus obviously did not approve of the lucrative trade in

sacrifices, and the blood, gore and commercialism that it brought to the Temple. This dislike of sacrifice was a peculiarly Essene viewpoint and prohibition, as Professor Geza Vermes points out:

The Council of the Community was to be the 'Most Holy Dwelling for Aaron (the priesthood)' where 'without the flesh of slaughter and the fat of sacrifice', 'a sweet fragrance' was to be sent up to god' to serve 'as an acceptable fragrance of righteousness'. 22

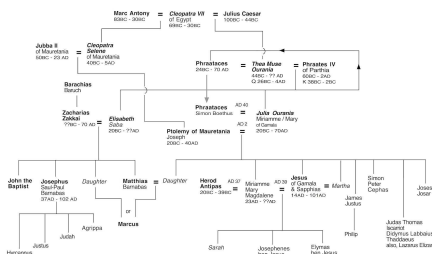


Fig 10.2 More complex genealogy of

Like Jesus himself, the Essene Sect wanted to end Temple sacrifices and substitute the burning of incense instead.^{J23} So a high priest of the Temple who wanted to end the age-old tradition of the sacrifice is likely to have been influenced by the teachings of the Essene and Galilean sects, and if Johanan ben Zakkai was Saul-Josephus then this would have been just so.

However, Rabbi Johanan was the only Jew in the Empire who was in a position to change that long-held tradition, and that tradition did indeed end after the fall of Jerusalem. Jews today do not take doves, sheep, goats or cattle to their synagogues to be ritually slaughtered, and it was Saul-

Josephus-Johanan who brought about that fundamental change in ritual.

Zacharias

The level of power that Saul-Josephus-Johanan wielded from Jabneh implies that he was not simply rich, basking in the largesse of Vespasian and Titus, he was in effect the *de facto* high priest and governor of all Judaeo-Israel. All of Judaeon politics, theology and history were now formulated and controlled from Saul-Josephus' scholarly cloisters at Jabneh, and at the same time the growing influence of Simple Judaism was controlled from this same university by the same person! Saul-Josephus-Johanan had become almost as influential as the emperor himself; and how he must have enjoyed that feeling of power,

having suffered so much adversity and abuse.

This is quite a revelation, another *eureka* moment. The figure of Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai is well known and greatly revered within modern Judaism, as he is considered to have been the most important *tanna* or sage of the first century AD. Here is the figure who steadied the helm of Judaism after the tragedy of the fall of Jerusalem, and who negotiated its future with the Roman administration. Here is the character who shaped modern Judaism, especially in reforming Temple worship and composing and compiling the new Talmudic texts, in which he plays a major part. Here also is the character who formed a new Judaism according to his own opinions and convictions, by ending the age-old tradition of

Temple sacrifices.

Having made this bold postulation, that Johanan ben Zakkai and Saul-Josephus were the same person, just what does modern Judaism have to say of this? The Jews are inveterate chroniclers who have traditionally noted each and every detail of their history, so what do they have to say about the life, times and origins of Johanan ben Zakkai, the founder of modern Judaism? Strangely enough, the Jews don't seem to know who on Earth this important rabbi was. The Talmud contains many of Johanan's sayings and deliberations in law, but nothing about his family or his life. Apart from the accounts that say he collected Temple taxes and lived in Galilee for a while and exclaimed that 'Galilee would fall into the hand of robbers' – all of which is reminiscent

of Saul-Josephus' actions as army commander of Galilee – Johanan ben Zakkai's history is totally lacking.

We appear to be following a trend here, for not only does Christianity manage to lose all its key players from history, but so does Judaism too. How convenient. However, it is my firm belief that Jewish historians have deliberately missed the obvious truth here, most probably because they did not like what they found. The truth is that Johanan ben Zakkai is very well-known and not simply as Saul-Josephus. In fact, he is well-known in the New Testament, and this is interesting, for it may give us a further insight into the ancestry of Saul-Josephus.

The problem in making this identification is that Zakkai is a

Hebrew name, and since the majority of the New Testament was written in Greek we need to look at this name in the Greek. In doing so, the first thing we find is that Johanan יוחנן is the Hebrew version of the Greek name John Ιωάννης. Secondly, the surname of Zakkai זכאי is the short form of Zechariah זכריה or, when translating into the Greek, Zacharias Ζαχαρίας. So in the New Testament, Johanan ben Zakkai's name would actually have been John ben Zacharias – and if this name does not ring a bell with readers, they need to open the Bible a little more often. John ben Zacharias is more commonly known as John the Baptist (his father was Zacharias).

Another *eureka* moment, I feel. But perhaps not, because all of the events that involve Johanan ben Zakkai in the Talmud happened in the AD 60s

and 70s, and we are as sure as we can be in this research that John the Baptist died in AD 33 – the famous death that occurred during the rule of Pontius Pilate that was later mistaken for that of Jesus. So why, in this case, was Johanan ben Zakkai named John ben Zacharias, or John the Baptist?

The answer lies in the death of John and the birth of my uncle. No, really! When my uncle Vincent died in the First World War, his parents named their next ‘replacement’ child ‘Vincent’ in his honour. But the new Vincent, presumably not wanting to be a living memorial to his late brother, called himself Peter instead. But this is a natural reaction to the loss of a son, and the parents of John the Baptist, I believe, did exactly the same. John the Baptist was probably born in AD 6 (the birth usually ascribed to Jesus) and the

King Herod of Judaea mentioned at his birth was 'King' Herod Archelous, not King Herod the Great. John died in AD 33, at the hands of Herod Antipas, having criticised the tetrarch's marriage plans, aged 27. His parent's new 'replacement' son was born some four years later in AD 37, and in memory of their late son he too was called John (Johanan). (Presumably Zacharias had acquired another wife by this time, as the age gap is rather large here; but since many important people in this era had multiple wives, this would not be unusual. Having said this, my grandparent's twelve children spanned a full twenty five years.)

However, the new John (Johanan) ben Zacharias was likewise not impressed with being a living memorial to his late brother, and searched around for a different name.

As the list of high priests demonstrates, the name Johanan (John) can easily be confused with (or the equivalent of) Joseph, and so the name he settled upon was Joseph ben Zacharias – and we know him rather better today as Saul-Josephus. This would mean, of course, that Saul-Josephus' father was Zacharias, the husband of Elisabeth who, according to the Koran, was also the guardian and foster-father of Mary the Virgin. [K24](#)

One other thing to note is that all of these references to Zacharias *Ζαχαρίας*, bar one, occur in the Gospel of Luke (and in the Koran). But readers should recall that the Gospel of Luke is the gospel that is likely to have been written by Saul-Josephus himself; because it was the introduction to Acts of the Apostles and it bears many similarities with the works of

Josephus. Thus, the only gospel that looks like it has a great deal of Saul-Josephine content is also the only gospel to mention the parents of John the Baptist, Zacharias and Elisabeth, and the only gospel to mention John's birth. Rather fittingly, this gospel also opens its account with a glowing tribute to Zacharias' piety and holiness. It is almost as if the Gospel of Luke was dedicated to John the Baptist, which is what one might expect if John was the half-brother of Saul-Josephus-Johanan.

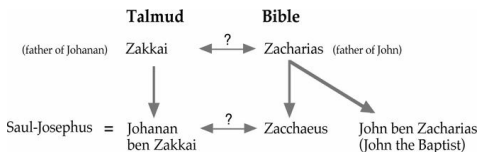
Zacchaeus

But this is not all, for there is another, as yet unmentioned character, who is also mentioned only in the Gospel of Luke, and in no other part of the New Testament, and his name is Zacchaeus

(Zakchaios) Ζακχαιος. So is this person one and the same as Zacharias? Well, not quite. The biblical Concordance does not mention this fact, for some strange reason, but the Greek suffix ‘*aio*s’ actually means ‘son of’; and so the person called Zacchaeus is actually being called the ‘Son of Zacharias’, the son of the man we have just discussed (Saul-Josephus-Johanan’s father).

However, if we use a Hebrew equivalent, the name Zacch-aeus can also be read as Zakkai-ben (or Ben Zakkai, the Son of Zakkai). So Johanan ben Zakkai may well have been Zacchaeus, for their names are absolutely identical except in being written in two different languages. Therefore, it is highly likely that we have just discovered a reference to the Judaeen high priest, Johanan ben Zakkai, within the New Testament.

Now perhaps I don't need to point this out, but when using my previous decipherment, the son of Zacharias becomes Saul-Josephus himself, and so Zacchaeus (the son of Zacharias) is simply another name for Saul-Josephus. But if Johanan ben Zakkai was also Zacchaeus, then Saul-Josephus must likewise have been Johanan ben Zakkai. The argument sounds circular but it is not, because we have arrived at this same conclusion from two different directions. In short, the compound name has just got longer, and this character was actually called Saul-Josephus-Johanan-Zacchaeus or Saul-Josephus-Johanan-ben-Zakkai or even Saul-Josephus-John-ben-Zacharias; it all means the same thing.



While further evidence for this association between Saul-Josephus, Johanan ben Zakkai and Zacchaeus will be presented shortly, it is unfortunate that we have so many names for each individual. If these links, associations and multiple appellations appear to be unreasonable and pure wishful thinking on my part, please remember the example of Judas Iscariot that I gave, who has five names in the New Testament alone. Even more pertinent is the fact that the New Testament gives Jesus about one hundred different names, and yet we are quite familiar with and content to use many of these names. These alternative names include the familiar:

Nazarene, Messiah, Christ, Vine, Emmanuel, Holy One, Corner Stone, King of the Jews, Lord, Good Shepherd, The Light, Son of Man, The Way and The Word. It also includes the more obscure: Morning Star, Son of Righteousness, Faithful Witness, Little Child and Desire of all Nations.^{B25}

Readers might contend that these are not names, as such, but descriptions instead. Well, that may appear so in the English translation, but if these ‘descriptions’ were left in the original Greco-Hebrew we would simply have names like: Akrogonaios (corner stone) or Ampelus Αμπελος (vine), which would appear as meaningless names in a direct English transliteration. Likewise, the gospels admit that Saul was called Paul; Peter was called both Simon and Cephas; while another

Simon was called Zelotes, Canaan or Patriot, depending on which Bible you read. This is to say nothing of the multiple Marys that proliferate the gospel stories and cry out for amalgamation (all four women at the crucifixion were called Mary).

Multiple names and a confusion of names are therefore not unusual in the New Testament accounts. So let us summarise the logic behind the new names that have been discovered for the family of Saul-Josephus:

- i. Rabbi Johanan was the son of Zakkai, and Johanan's life is remarkably similar to that of Rabbi Saul-Josephus (both Saul and Josephus claimed to be rabbis).

ii. There appears to be an equivalent of Zakkai mentioned in the Gospel of Luke, and his name is Zacharias, the Greek form of the name Zakkai. The son of Zacharias was Johanan ben Zacharias, or John the Baptist, and this is exactly the same name as that for Johanan ben Zakkai.

iii. There is also a Zacchaeus in the Gospel of Luke, and this name means 'Son of Zacharias' (Son of Zakkai). So, Johanan ben Zakkai and Zacchaeus have exactly the same name, and their father was called Zakkai (Zacharias).

iv. But we have already identified Johanan ben Zakkai as having very similar opinions and identical life-experiences to those of Saul-Josephus. Ergo, Zacchaeus is highly likely to have been an alternate name for Saul-Josephus.

v. Zacchaeus is said to have been a tax-gatherer, which is exactly what Saul-Josephus was doing in Galilee prior to the Jewish War. As army commander for the region, he was also in charge of gathering the taxes, and he was accused on several occasions of gathering rather too much

for himself.

This mention of taxes or rather the gathering of money, be that legally or illegally, leads us on to a rather neat confirmation that Zacchaeus (ben Zacharias or ben Zakkai) was indeed Saul-Josephus. The initial proof for this is that Zacchaeus is said, in the Gospel of Luke, to be so small that he has to climb a tree in order to see Jesus.

And (Zacchaeus) sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the crowd, because he was little of stature ... and he climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him. **B26**

But Saul (Josephus) later adopted the name Paul (or Paulos Παῦλος in the Latin), as we saw earlier, and *paulos* just happens to mean ‘small’. So the account of a diminutive Zacchaeus having to climb a tree to see Jesus is a

direct confirmation that Zacchaeus is Paul (Saul-Josephus). Now while it is possible that this name and this verse are references to Zacchaeus-Saul-Josephus being physically small in stature, it is far more likely that this is a deliberate literary allusion, by Saul-Josephus, to tell those ‘with ears to hear’ that this biblical paragraph refers himself. Remember that ‘paul’ (small) is simply the equivalent of the modern ‘junior’, and this name was given to Saul because he was the younger brother. However, this nickname may have been reinforced and made slightly derogatory by Saul-Josephus being considered a ‘lightweight’, religiously speaking. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says:

Whosoever shall break one of these commandments (of Judaic Law), and shall teach men to do so, he shall be called the least

It was Saul-Josephus who broke every one of these commandments and taught many of his followers to do likewise, and so it was most certainly he who was being called 'least'. But 'least' (*elachstos* ελαχιστος) is a Greek equivalent of the Latin *paulos*, meaning 'small', and so Saul-Josephus was being called the 'small' or 'lightweight': he was being called 'Paul', which is why he inherited this name. Thus Saul-Josephus (Paul the Junior/Lightweight) was not physically short, but he most definitely was Zacchaeus ben Zacharias.

The paragraph in Luke goes on to say that Zacchaeus (Saul-Josephus) wanted to atone for his harsh tax gathering (or theft).

And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the lord

(Jesus), 'Behold, lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I will restore fourfold.'[B28](#)

But this is exactly what Saul-Josephus was trying to do in his book *Life*; he was trying to wriggle out of having plundered gold from Hamat Teverya, the palace of Tetrarch Antipas at Tiberias and, perhaps more importantly, out of having attacked and robbed the wife of Ptolemy, the governor of Agrippa II. The identity of this Ptolemy and his wife will be explained in a following chapter, as they are rather famous. It was for these transgressions that Saul-Josephus was summonsed before a court in Tarichaeae on the Sea of Galilee, and the person who summonsed him to that court was none other than Jesus of Gamala: the biblical Jesus.[J29](#) Here,

then, we appear to have two accounts of the same event.

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus just happens to be passing by and Zacchaeus (Saul-Josephus) happens to see him. Onlookers are agitated about Jesus meeting with a 'sinner' (an αμαρτωλος or tax collector), but during the meeting Zacchaeus is persuaded to return all the money he 'wrongfully exacted' (or stole). As the gospel says, 'For Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost.' It was the money that had been lost (or stolen), and now it was returned, but only due to the pressure exerted on Zacchaeus by Jesus during this meeting.

In great contrast, the account in Josephus' *Life* is far less fanciful. Here, Jesus summonses Saul-Josephus (Zacchaeus) to the hippodrome in

Tarichaeae to answer questions before the court and the people, regarding the theft of money from the palace and from the wife of the king's governor. In response, Saul-Josephus gives one of his usual heart-rending speeches about his innocence and honesty – in their eyes he is guilty, but if they could only understand that he was not stealing the money, just keeping it safe for the king (a likely story). But this excuse was not popular with the people, presumably because the king was pro-Roman and they were not. Thus, aware of the adverse public mood, Saul-Josephus suddenly changed tack and said that he was actually going to use this money to rebuild the defensive walls of the city. The people were apparently moved by this opportunistic political dissembling, but Jesus and his guards were not. Later, a fight ensued

and, after wounding some of Jesus' guards, Saul-Josephus eventually escaped across the Sea of Galilee by boat.^{J30}

The two accounts are obviously the same, and Zacchaeus-Saul-Josephus had been brought to answer questions about this theft, but the gospel version of these court proceedings has simply been layered with saccharine for the gullible audiences of the Church of Simple Judaism. However, no matter how much sugar has been applied, once again we see that there is material from Saul-Josephus' *Life* that appears in the gospels; especially the Gospel of Luke. And once again we also see evidence for a much later date for the gospel stories. These events took place in the late AD 60s, and so this is yet more evidence that Jesus was an important

person (the governor of Tiberias, and commander of a private army) who was alive and well in the years immediately preceding the Jewish War. More importantly, perhaps, we also see that Zacchaeus was indeed Saul-Josephus, for if these events are the same then so too must be the characters in this story.

Finally, one last piece of evidence for this amalgamation may be concealed within the pseudonyms that Saul-Josephus chose for himself and his father. The name Zacharias *Ζαχαρίας* (the father) comes from the Hebrew Zechariah זכריה. It is said that the two elements of this name, *zakar* זכר and *yah* יה, mean 'Remembered by God'. But within Judaism this word is perhaps more meaningful than a simple remembrance; for the Talmud has no word for 'history' and the word *zakar*

זכר is often used instead (on 172 occasions, to be precise). Thus, the pseudonym being used for Saul-Josephus' father (Zacharias) probably meant something like 'History of God' or 'God's Historian'.

However, we have already seen that Zacchaeus was the son of Zacharias and that Zacchaeus was actually a pseudonym for Saul-Josephus. It is highly appropriate that this particular pseudonym and family history have been arranged so that 'Zacchaeus' means 'Son of the Historian'. As we already know, Saul-Josephus was Judaism's greatest historian ^{*2}, and here we see that he has contrived a pseudonym in the New Testament that may mean 'Son of History'. It is a fitting and believable hypocorism, and one that again demonstrates that Saul-Josephus was

behind all of this deceit.

Family of stars

In the chapter on Barnabas, it was proved beyond all reasonable doubt that Saul-Josephus and his brother Matthias were both surnamed Barnabas (in the Greek) and Bar-sabas (in the Persio-Aramaic). Readers might recall that Queen Zenobia had the same surname, she being called Sabba (Zabba) in the Persio-Aramaic and Senobia (Zenobia) in the Greek.

The research in this chapter has identified Saul-Josephus as also being called Zacchaeus (or Ben Zakkai), the son of Zacharias and therefore the half-brother of John the Baptist. While this might be regarded by some as an association too far, the fact that we have previously identified Saul-

Josephus as being surnamed Barnabas (Barsabas), just like his brother Matthias, can help to confirm this issue.

For this confirmation we need to look at the Mandaeans, the intensely secretive sect of Nazarene pseudo-Christians who live today in the marshlands of the Euphrates delta: the Marsh Arabs who were systematically persecuted by Saddam Hussain. The Mandaeans could be labelled as being Sabaeans, much as the people of Saba (Sheba) in the Arabian peninsula were many centuries ago, and the primary difference between Mandaeism and Christianity is that they revere John the Baptist while rejecting Jesus as being a false prophet. This is not unlike the paragraphs in Saul-Josephus' *War* and in the gospels, that identify Jesus as being the 'Egyptian False Prophet'. [BJ32](#)

The interesting thing to note here is that their *Drasa d Yahia*, the ‘Book of John the Baptist’, calls John the Baptist’s father, Abba Saba Zechariah or ‘Father Star Zacharias’.³³ The Mandaeans similarly call John the Baptist, Yahia Saba or Yahia Star (‘Yahia’ is not necessarily a direct transliteration of ‘John’ as we shall see later).³⁴

In addition, the wife of Zacharias (the mother of John the Baptist) was called Elisabeth Ελισαβετ (Luke 1:13). This name is taken from the Hebrew Eli-sheba אֱלִישָׁבַע, which the biblical Concordance says means ‘god’s oath’. I suppose it could mean this, but the primary meaning of *saba* (*sheba*) throughout history was either *sheba* שבע meaning ‘seven’ or *sheba* שֵׁבַע meaning ‘star’. See the book

Solomon for a long discussion on this topic. Thus Eli-sabeth was either called 'God's Seven' or 'God's Star', in much the same manner that the Queen of Sheba was.

We now arrive at the rather satisfying position where we find that Zacharias was called Abba Saba (Father Star), Elisabeth was called Eli-Saba (God's Star), and John the Baptist was called Yahia Saba (Yahia Star). In other words, the husband, wife and son in this family all have the title of 'star'. However, this chapter has identified Saul-Josephus as being Zacchaeus, another son of Zacharias, and so Saul-Josephus should also have been called the 'star', just as his parents and brother were. But, as we have already seen, Saul-Josephus and his brother Matthias were indeed named 'star' — they were surnamed

Barsabas (Bar-Sabas or Barnabas), which means 'Son of the Star'. This title is quite apposite, for they were the sons of Abba Saba Zacharias, who was called 'Father Star'. Thus, two separate investigations have arrived at the same conclusion: that Saul-Josephus was a son of Abba Saba Zacharias and Elisabeth.

Incidentally, this family relationship means that Saul-Josephus was actually the cousin of the biblical Jesus, a relationship which simply heightens the tensions that must have existed between these two competing characters. It would appear that Saul-Josephus did the same as countless lesser royals have done before him. Denied the princely accolades and the opportunity of sitting on a throne, he has gone to a neighbouring empire and said, 'Can you help me?' That

neighbouring empire was Rome, and their assistance came in the form of Commander and Emperor Vespasian.

Barabbas

This identification of Johanan ben Zakkai with Saul-Josephus may also help to solve the identity of another mysterious biblical character, Barabbas. As most people will already know, Jesus was to be crucified along with three other men, one of whom was a robber or murderer called Barabbas who managed to be released. However, what is not so well known is that this robber or murderer was a close companion of Jesus, who had taken part in the Jewish Rebellion. The Gospel of Mark says of this murderer:

And there was one named Barabbas, which

lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him (with Jesus), who had committed murder in the insurrection. [B35](#)

Funnily enough, the venerable theologian Adam Clarke, who has a commentary on nearly every verse in the Bible, has no commentary for this one! This is not surprising, really, for this verse clearly states that Jesus was a revolutionary and his companion had committed murder in the course of that very same revolution; a rebellion that most probably referred to the Jewish War of AD 65-70. Thus, Jesus was a royal rebel who had led the Jewish Revolt, but this is hardly the image or chronology that the Church is trying to promote. However, the evidence unearthed in this book clearly demonstrates that Jesus *was* the revolutionary leader of the Galilean Sect, the very same sect that

orchestrated the Jewish Rebellion.

In fact, the Gospel of John refers to Barabbas as a *lestes* ληστης which can indeed be translated as 'robber'. However, Josephus (Saul), in his copious works, tends to use this same term to describe the Zealots, the Jewish revolutionaries who were so closely allied to the Galilean Church of Jesus and to the disciples themselves. As already noted, the disciple called Simon, who is likely to have been Jesus' brother, was called Simon Zelotes Σιμων Ζηλωτης, or Simon the Zealot; and so it is absolutely certain that Jesus commanded a number of Zealots like Barabbas within the ranks of his closest compatriots.

In which case, the Gospel of Mark was right and Barabbas and Jesus were both leaders in this

rebellion, and that is why they were both sentenced to be crucified. But the intrigue does not stop there, of course, and even more devastating to the Church is the fact that this man called Barabbas was actually called Jesus.

Barabbas – This person had, a short time before, raised an insurrection in Jerusalem, in which it appears that some lives were lost. In some manuscripts and in the Armenian and Syriac *Hieros*, this man has the surname of Jesus. Professor Birch has discovered this same reading in a Vatican manuscript written in 949, and numbered 354.³⁶

Ouch, I feel another cover-up brewing! Clearly this identification had major implications for the Church, for the last thing it wanted was a murderer and their Jesus Christ getting muddled up on their respective crosses. ‘Which Jesus did you ask to welease? (*sic*) Was it Jesus-Justus or Jesus-Woger?’

(sic) Accordingly, a copyist at some point in the last thousand years has deleted the name 'Jesus' from this verse, and all other Bibles ever since have followed suit.

Yet again we see how the biblical texts have been subtly altered to suit the creed – nothing is quite as it is presented, for the Church is a mendacious, self-serving institution that is solely concerned with its own survival rather than the truth. This is why it fought so long and hard to prevent the Bible from being translated into the common languages of Europe, for they knew that a close examination of the texts would eventually bring the whole house of cards tumbling down. To that end William Tyndale, the first person to translate the Bible into English in 1526, was branded a heretic by Cardinal Wolsey; and he was

eventually arrested, tried for heresy, and burned at the stake. So much for the forgiving and charitable Church.

And let's not fool ourselves that the Christian Church was naturally evolving into the relatively peaceful institution that we see today. We have only reached this position because the heroes of the Protestant Reformation and the Renaissance Illuminati, backed by members of the Craft, browbeat the Catholic Church into submission. This was at the dreadful cost of a hundred years of intermittent civil war across all of Europe, and hundreds of thousands of lives. But the dreaded Inquisition, or Holy Office, still lingers on today as it was never dissolved. In 1965 it was renamed the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, where it still concerns itself with internal Church discipline.

Incidentally, the current pope, Benedict XVI, was a former prefect of this same Congregation; so if reader's feet start to feel uncomfortably warm, they will know why.

In essence, the institutions of repression and torture are still there, waiting in the wings. If we let up our guard, the horrors of Pandora's theological box can and will rapidly spring to life again, and we see the results of some of those horrors in the guise of Islamic terrorism. Fundamentalist belief is a dangerous and repressive force, and since Islam has never been through a Renaissance as yet, let alone a Reformation process, we still see the raw hatred and bigotry that unrestrained religion produces.*³ Unless we bring Islam under the calming forces of secularism, with the ability to probe, research, and

perhaps even to poke fun at and belittle the so-called 'Religion of Peace' (as the media regularly does to Christianity), we are threatened with a potential apocalypse.

Unfortunately, our present supine, craven media and governments pander to Islamic extremism by seeking excuses for every bombing, atrocity or rabid demonstration because of a cartoon. *4 Apparently, the perpetrators of these vile acts can be partly excused and deserve some of our sympathy, because they were provoked into these acts by Israel, the USA, George Bush, 9-11, the Crusades, Ferdinand and Isabella, Lawrence of Arabia, the Danish media, too many petrodollars, Ayaan Hirsi or even the fairy-tale of the three little pigs (delete as appropriate). This reaction is somewhat hypocritical,

because these same media and political leaders would never dream of soliciting excuses for a neo-Nazi organisation that committed similar acts of violence.

Returning to the continuing saga of Barabbas, we have not as yet established his identity, but we do have a reasonable amount of information about him.

- a. He was a revolutionary leader who worked closely with Jesus.
- b. He was important enough for the authorities to make an example of him.
- c. He was a Zealot leader (during the siege of Jerusalem).
- d. He used the name Bar Abbas (Barabbas) or 'Son of the

Father’.

So does this give us enough information to make an identification? Well, yes it does, and the answer is to be found in the Talmud once more. Here, there is a mention of another revolutionary figure, whose name and description fits those of Barabbas rather well. The Jewish Encyclopaedia says of this character:

He was an insurrectionary leader who lived in first century Palestine. According to Talmudic accounts, he took a very prominent part in the uprising against Rome in AD 70, being then at the head of the Zealots at Jerusalem.³⁷

Like Barabbas, this character was also a Zealot leader who was involved in the uprising in Jerusalem, and there cannot have been too many of those. So who was this character who seems to be so similar to the biblical Barabbas?

The Encyclopaedia continues:


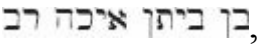
He was Abba Sikkra the nephew of Johanan ben Zakkai ... After the Zealots had destroyed all storehouses, thus causing a famine in the besieged city,*⁵ Johanan ben Zakkai invited Abba to an interview and asked him: 'Why do you act in such a manner? Will you kill us by famine?' Abba replied: 'What shall I do? If I tell them anything of the kind, they will slay me.'³⁸

Now this is interesting, and it may well drag Saul-Josephus even deeper into this revolutionary uprising; for it now appears likely that Abba Sikkra was the biblical Bar Abbas (Barabbas), as they were both leaders of the Zealots during the siege of Jerusalem and they both have similar names. Bar Abbas (Barabbas) was a *lestes*, or Zealot, and so an alternative name for Barabbas might be Abba Zealotes, which is almost exactly the same title as Abba Sikkra. Abba Sikkra simply

means ‘Father of the Sicarii’, and the Sicarii were simply Zealots who used their curved *sicarii* circumcision knives to assassinate political leaders. We know that Sicarii assassins were numbered among the disciples as Judas Iscariot was a Sicarii.

Abba Sikkra (Barabbas) is also said to have been the nephew of Johanan ben Zakkai (he was his sister’s son). Yet Johanan ben Zakkai was a pseudonym for Saul-Josephus, and therefore a nephew*⁶ of Saul-Josephus was probably the leader of the Zealots in Jerusalem.^{T39} Note, once more, how this identification would again mean that the crucifixion of Jesus occurred in AD 70.

Abba Sikkra was also said to have been the leader of the Biryoni בִּירְיָה, a word that means ‘palace’, and he was sometimes called Batiah בַּתְיָה

which again means ‘palace’. The latter name was originally an Egyptian word, being derived from *bat*  meaning ‘king’. Obviously, the king lived in a palace, which is how this word was derived. In actual fact, the full name of Abba Sikkra is given in the notes to the Talmud as being Ben Batiah Ekah Rab , which translates as ‘The Son of the Palace of Great Sorrow’, and this would be a typically caustic Talmudic description of an unpopular royal family.^{T42}

So Abba Sikkra (Barabbas) was a part of a royal family that lived in a palace, a family that had evidently fallen on hard times and had become unpopular. So which royal family suffered greatly after the fall of Jerusalem and became unpopular? In the next chapter we shall discover that it was actually the royal family of

Jesus and Mary Magdalene, and Abba Sikkra was most certainly linked to this royal family in some fashion. Zealots and Sicarii like Simon, Judas and Abba Sikkra were, of course, hugely unpopular after the destruction of Jerusalem, and so the Talmud delights in informing us that Mary Magdalene was subsequently to be seen picking grains of corn from among the dung of donkeys – how were the mighty fallen.

Summary

The Talmud gives a report about Johanan ben Zakkai surrendering to Vespasian, that is the same as Saul-Josephus' surrender to Vespasian.

Johanan ben Zakkai was granted the same requests by Vespasian as was Saul-Josephus, including the life of a wounded Jesus and a certain 'plot of land'.

That 'plot of land' was actually Jabneh, the Judaic university and 'parliament'. It was here that Saul-Josephus' many books were composed and written.

Johanan ben Zakkai went on to become High Priest of Jerusalem and the most influential rabbi after the fall of Jerusalem. If this rabbi was actually Saul-Josephus, then this places a greatly different spin on modern Judaic history.

Johanan-Saul-Josephus' father may have been Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. (Johanan ben Zakkai is exactly the same name as John the Baptist.)

Zacharias, Elisabeth and John the Baptist were all surnamed Saba or 'star'. Saul-Josephus, as Barnabas, was also surnamed 'star', which confirms that he was of this family.

This evidence suggests that Saul-Josephus not only created

Christianity, but modern Judaism too.

arabbas, the man who was to be crucified with Jesus, was Abba Sikkra, a rebel Zealot and Sicarii leader during the siege of Jerusalem.

*1 A character from the UK comedy series, 'Black Adder'.

*2 Justus of Tiberias may have been an even greater (and more honest) Judaeen historian, but we do not have his texts to compare with those of Saul-Josephus. Justus of Tiberias' history of Judaea would have conflicted greatly with both the gospel accounts and those of Saul-Josephus, as the latter readily admits, and they would therefore have been destroyed by both Saul-Josephus and the later Christian clergy.

*3 Remember that many of the European bombers were highly educated professionals, and so the common claim that suicide bombings stem from poverty and ignorance is nonsense.

*4 Incidentally, in the same week that the cartoons depicting Muhummad were published (and some of these cartoons were really quite funny), the UK media ran the top 100 religious jokes. As readers might expect, not one of these jokes poked fun at Islam; so it was perfectly all right to mock Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism, but not Islam. However, any organisation, be it religious, political or corporate, that places itself above criticism and satire naturally becomes tyrannical and despotic, and we allow that process to fester and escalate at our peril.

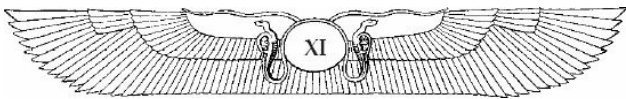
*5 It is interesting that the Talmud again insists that Johanan ben Zakkai was in Jerusalem during the siege, or at least able to converse with the revolutionary leaders. There are two ways in which this could have been achieved. Either the revolutionary leaders were invited to a conference in no-man's land, or Saul-Josephus-Johanan (SJJ) was inserted back into Jerusalem as a spy. His initial surrender was at Jotapata in AD 67, but the siege of Jerusalem did not start until AD 70. There was plenty of time for Vespasian to have organised SJJ's 'escape' from the Roman forces, so that he could find out what was going on in Jerusalem. But SJJ would then have needed to escape from Jerusalem to perform the deeds he describes in *Jewish War*, and hence we have the story about this exit from the

city in a coffin.

*6 This may have been the Marcus mentioned in Colossians 4:10, as both are prominently called the 'sister's son'. As there were great age differences between cousins in this era, and since Saul-Josephus was the youngest of his family, this particular nephew could have been older than his uncle.

Part II

The history of King
Jesus-Justus



Queen Mary Magdalene

Although we have already seen the rise in status of Jesus and his family, from poor artisans to influential people of some standing in Judaeen society, at present we still have a rather hazy notion of exactly who they were in the historical record. In addition, some of my assertions, that this family were exiled royals from Egypt and Parthia (Persia), may have appeared to be, well, somewhat circumstantial. However, as this chapter proceeds, we shall eventually find a whole new

vista, in which the family of Jesus and Mary emerge onto the world stage as very wealthy, hugely influential and fairly well-known characters from history. The New Testament was never a tale of paupers, saints and miracles; instead it was a genuine history about influential rulers, royal families and pivotal events in the eastern Roman Empire.

The first thing we need to do is to return to a character we have obliquely touched on previously, Justus of Tiberias, for there is much more information to be unearthed here. Justus was certainly very influential in this era, for he wrote an entire history of Judaea and the Jewish people, just as Saul-Josephus-Johanan did. But rather than this Justus therefore being yet another a pseudonym for Josephus, he was actually the latter's worst

enemy. Saul-Josephus (St Paul) fulminates against Justus' perceived 'lies' and 'fabrications', so he was definitely not Saul-Josephus. So who was he?

In Josephus' *Life*, we are given an interesting detail, for Justus of Tiberias is said here to have been the brother (or brother-in-law) of Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus).^{J1} This close family relationship appears to be confirmed by the account that says that Jesus and Justus were both governors of Tiberias – so Jesus of Gamala was 'of Tiberias' just as much as Justus of Tiberias was. But if Justus of Tiberias was a 'brother' of Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus) then which of the three brothers was he? Jesus' brother James was called 'Justus', in a very similar fashion to Justus of Tiberias, but brother James (alias Stephen) was

already dead by this time, as far as we know (he died c. AD 62 or 66). So if this Justus could not be James, who was he?

I did wonder if Justus could have been a reference to Joses, another of Jesus' brothers, but the details just did not fit properly. But we are running out of brothers here and the somewhat lateral alternative, therefore, is that Justus may have been a reference to Jesus himself, and the scribe who wrote this text was confused about the family relationships. The problem the scribe faced was that Jesus had married his sister (Mary), and it is entirely possible that the scribe was trying to cover that up, and so Jesus became his own brother in order to separate Jesus and Mary. This interpretation is supported by the verse in Colossians which records someone

called Jesus-Justus as being a colleague of Saul's (Colossians was written before Saul's persecution of the Galilean Sect):

... and Jesus, who is called Justus, who are Jews. These only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of god, which have been a comfort unto me.^{B2}

Therefore, there was a character in the New Testament who was called Jesus-Justus. Note again how Saul-Josephus does not regard himself as being a proper Jew, and deliberately separates himself from Jesus-Justus. As we have already seen, the primary conflict Saul-Josephus had with orthodox Jews and with the Galilean Sect was the doctrine of circumcision; but the translation of this particular verse from the King James Bible is misleading, because Jesus-Justus is not being

called a 'Jew' here but 'of the circumcision'. One can sense that Saul-Josephus is being disparaging here, and doesn't regard those of 'the circumcision' – a faction which included the biblical Jesus – as being his equal.

The suggestion made previously was that Justus of Tiberias was actually a pseudonym for Jesus of Gamala, and therefore the Jesus-Justus in this verse may well have been the biblical Jesus. Surprisingly, the information we have about this mysterious Justus of Tiberias does contain many similarities with Jesus of Gamala. So, by making this additional amalgamation we may have just discovered some further texts that relate to the biblical Jesus. Here are a few of the commonalities between these characters:

a. Justus was a governor of Tiberias, as was Jesus of Gamala.^{J3}

b. Justus set a number of villages near Galilee on fire, as did Jesus of Gamala. ^{J4}

c. Justus caused the revolt of Tiberias against Rome, as did Jesus of Gamala.^{J5}

d. Justus killed a great number of enemies in Tiberias, as did Jesus of Gamala.^{J6}

e. Saul-Josephus blamed Justus for the Jewish Civil War and the destruction of Jerusalem, just as he similarly blamed Jesus of Gamala and the Galileans.^{J7}

f. In Josephus' *Life* the various references to Justus and Jesus appear to be separated into discrete sections, as though two scribes had used two different titles or names for the same person.

g. The main adversaries of Josephus in *Life* are Justus of Tiberias and Jesus of Tiberias (Jesus of Gamala). When he was not battling with the one he was contending with the other, as if the one was the shadow of the other.

So is this possible? Could Justus of Tiberias really have been a pseudonym for Jesus of Tiberias (Jesus of Gamala,

the biblical Jesus)? This would certainly make a great deal of sense, for it is a fact that the biblical Jesus was called Justus in Acts:

Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Just One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered.[B8](#)

This is the biblical Jesus being called the Just One, or Righteous One, which is the root of the name Justus *Ιουστος* (and the English word 'justice'). However, in the Hebrew the equivalent term is Zadok *צדוק*, which also means the Just or Righteous, and so the surname here may have simply been 'Zadok'. Remember that the compatriot of Judas-Zamaris of Gamala, who founded the Galilean Sect, was similarly called Zadok (or Justus). Similarly, as we have already seen, the

Essene called themselves the Sons of Zadok (Sons of Justus), and so 'Justus' may well identify someone as being an Essene. Therefore, John (the Baptist), James and Jesus may all have been called Justus at some point in time, for they were all allied to the Essene sect. Indeed, Saul-Josephus was also called Justus in Acts 1:23, and we know that he too was a (temporary) member of the Essene. So the name Jesus-Justus simply means Jesus the Essene or Jesus the Galilean.

However, perhaps the most compelling evidence for Saul-Josephus' scribes using different titles (Justus and Jesus) for the same person comes at the beginning of *Life*, where Saul-Josephus is trying to demolish the palace at Hamat Teverya that contained a mosaic of the zodiac (as mentioned in the chapter on the Qumran). Saul-

Josephus says of the characters present at this meeting:

We were, however, anticipated in our task by Jesus son of Sapphias, the ringleader, as already stated, of the party of rebel fishermen.^{J9}

Firstly, it should be noted that the person who Josephus met at Hamat Teverya was Justus of Tiberias who was the governor of Tiberias. However, it is Jesus of Sapphias (and Gamala and Tiberias) who then takes control of the situation and burns down the palace. So was this a reference to two individuals, or just one?

Well, the translator of Josephus Flavius adds a note to the sentence above saying, ‘this character is not previously mentioned in the text’; for there does not appear to be a previous mention of this ‘rebel ringleader’

called Jesus Sapphias within the book *Life*. The quotation is extracted from close to the beginning of *Life*, so did Josephus simply forget that he had not mentioned this Jesus Sapphias previously? In fact, it is probably the modern translator who is mistaken here and not Saul-Josephus, for there was a previous mention of this character but this former paragraph simply utilised the name Justus instead.

Justus, son of Pistus, the ringleader of the third party, while feigning hesitation about hostilities, was really eager for revolution. J12

This Justus was our old friend Justus of Tiberias, who was a rebel ringleader in the same mould as Jesus (of Gamala, Tiberias and Sapphias). Note here that Justus was the ‘ringleader of the third party’. Now Saul-Josephus has just explained the

various 'parties' or religious sects of Judaea, and the third sect he describes are the Essene (the fourth being the Galileans). Thus Justus of Tiberias was a ringleader of the Essene, which is exactly what Jesus of Sapphias-Gamala was (in addition to being the leader of the Galileans).

In other words, the rebel ringleader who Saul-Josephus was so often in conflict with in and around Galilee was actually called Jesus-Justus (of Sapphias and Gamala), and so this character *had* already been mentioned in the text of *Life*, just as Josephus claimed – he was just called Jesus-Justus in that particular paragraph and not Jesus Sapphias. The fact that this Jesus was called the son of Sapphias and not of Gamala is not a problem. As was explained previously, Gamala was the town Jesus came from

and Sapphias was the family nickname, which referred to his mother.*¹

New insights

From these numerous similarities and explanations, it would seem to be a proven fact that Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus) was called Justus on occasions, just as his brother James had once been. But this is rather interesting for, in addition to uncovering another pseudonym for Jesus, the circumstances in which this name is used can also give us a deeper insight into the real life of the historical Jesus.

Firstly, there is the revelation that Jesus-Justus killed many of the Greeks in Tiberias who were opposed to his governorship in the town. It has

already been explained that Jesus' disciples and followers were armed, and that Jesus led an attack on Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, but all of these operations were abortive and relatively bloodless. However, this is the first evidence for the biblical Jesus killing his opponents – an incident that had to be expunged from the New Testament accounts at all costs.

Secondly, we can see that Jesus (Jesus-Justus) was very close to King Agrippa II and his sister Berenice, and held an administrative position in his court as well as providing military assistance via his cohort of mounted archers. The Bible hints at Jesus being close to the royal court, with Joanna being the wife of the king's steward and Peter having access to the high priest's palace, but here we see Jesus

being invited to attend court with Agrippa and being a favourite of Berenice (Agrippa's sister-wife). As a further complication, it was this same Berenice who became the mistress of Titus, the son of Vespasian, who eventually became emperor of Rome.^{J13}

Thirdly, we may also be able to uncover a deeper insight into the biblical Jesus' motivation and allegiances during the Jewish Civil War. Josephus says of Jesus-Justus:

At the outbreak of the war the Tiberians determined to retain allegiance to the king (Agrippa II) and not revolt from Rome. (Jesus) Justus endeavoured to persuade them to resort to arms ... hoping to obtain the command of Galilee and his native country.^{J14}

(Jesus) Justus, the son of Pistus, the ringleader of the third party, while feigning hesitation on hostilities, was really eager for

revolution, reckoning that a change of government would bring him to power.^{J15}

Much as I speculated in *Cleopatra to Christ*, the primary objective of Jesus-Justice was to gain power. As a prince of both Persia and Egypt he had the right credentials but lacked a vacant throne or governmental seat to occupy. Revolution, however, often creates a power vacuum and a vacant position, and that is what Jesus-Justus was aiming for. The intention was to play the Romans against the Jerusalem authorities and Agrippa against everyone else, and watch for any opportunities that fell out of the melee. However, unfortunately for Jesus-Justus the ploy did not work out as planned and Jerusalem was eventually destroyed and he was exiled to England.

Fourthly, there is confusion as to the marital status of this Jesus-Justus. In one passage it is said that Jesus (of Gamala) was the ‘husband of the sister of Justus of Tiberias’ while another passage says he was the ‘brother of Justus of Tiberias’. The translator adds, helpfully, ‘there is some confusion here’, for the text is apparently contradictory. An independent translation of the first sentence modified this to, ‘Jesus, the brother and husband of Justus’ sister’. See *Life* 178 and 186 in all their many versions. The independent translator then observed that:

On first impression, (the husband) appears to mean Justus’ brother. This would mean that Jesus was both the brother and the husband of Justus’ sister.¹⁷

Which is probably what he was! The

less palatable and more unusual truth behind these convoluted lines is that Jesus-Justus was married to own his sister, and in desperately trying to cover this fact up, the names 'Jesus' and 'Justus' were placed in conjunction to one another as seemingly different people. In reality, this Jesus was Justus, and the sister in question was, of course, Mary Magdalene.

Strange as this incestuous union may at first seem, this was quite common within Egypto-royal families, especially the Ptolemies from whom I say these people were descended. Even King Agrippa II was in an incestuous relationship with his sister Berenice. This brother-sister marriage for Jesus and Mary is exactly what I deduced many years ago in the book *Jesus* by looking at the family

relationships within the New Testament. This suggestion was further enhanced in *Cleopatra to Christ* where Jesus' ancestors appear to have included Queen Thea Musa Ourania of Parthia (Persia), who also indulged in an incestuous marriage. But since this queen is likely to have been a direct descendant of the Ptolemaic pharaohs of Egypt, that is not so surprising.

Fifthly, Josephus confirms that this Jesus-Justus was the leader of the Galilean Sect at this time, as was Jesus of Gamala. In *Life* 40 Saul-Josephus states that 'our ruin' (the ruin of the Jews of Judaea) was entirely due to Justus of Tiberias. However, In *Antiquities* 18:8 this very same charge is laid at the feet of Judas-Zamaris of Gamala, who founded the Galilean Sect. Since Jesus of Gamala was probably the son of Judas-Zamaris of

Gamala, this confirms that Jesus of Gamala and Jesus-Justus were actually the same person. But since Jesus-Justus was the biblical Jesus, as we have seen, it is fitting that the latter was also accused of fomenting revolt against the Jerusalem authorities. John of Antioch is recorded as writing that:

Jesus ... was accused by the Jews of destroying their religious doctrine and introducing another in its stead.¹⁸

Furthermore, the death of Chares, who was said to have been Jesus-Justus' brother, was caused by an uprising against the 'Babylonian Jews' in Gamala. This uprising was sponsored and fomented by Varus, the out-of-control prince and administrator who killed all the messengers that had been sent by Philip of Gamala, as we saw earlier. But Chares was the brother of

Jesus-Justus, and so we see once more that Jesus-Justus (of Gamala) was closely involved and indeed the leader of the 'Babylonian' Galileans who were based in Gamala.

Sixthly, both Jesus of Gamala and Jesus-Justus were based in Galilee in general and Tiberias in particular. However, in Mark 7:24 the biblical Jesus was said to have made a secret visit to Tyre and Sidon, to get away from all the turmoil around him. The verse actually implies that Jesus was in hiding. In a similar fashion, Josephus says that Justus of Tiberias went to Berytus (Beirut) to escape the wrath of Vespasian; but Agrippa II decided not to imprison or execute him. Berytus lies just to the north of Tyre and Sidon.

Finally, perhaps we should remind

ourselves that it was this same Jesus-Justus of Tiberias (and Gamala) who became the greatest literary enemy that Saul-Josephus eventually faced. The otherwise-confident, boasting historian says of Jesus-Justus:

I have a mind to say a few things to (Jesus) Justus (of Tiberias), who has himself written a history concerning these affairs, as also to others who profess to write history, but have little regard to truth, and are not afraid, either out of ill-will or goodwill to some persons, to relate falsehoods. These men ... have no regard to truth. When, therefore, Justus undertook to write about these facts ... he falsified in what he related about me. [J19](#)

Ouch! Could there be a raw nerve or two here, by any chance? What did Jesus-Justus say, exactly, about Josephus? What was his alternative history of this region and what was his alternative ancestry for the primary players in this first-century drama? We

shall probably never know because, luckily for Saul-Josephus, he would not be faced with this alternative and critical history for too long. Courtesy of Vespasian and Titus, Saul-Josephus-Johanan was the victor in this battle of the histories; and so as the *de facto* high priest and governor of all Judaea, installed in his university in Jabneh, he was in a position to round up all the copies of Jesus-Justus' history of Judaea and dispose of them. Meanwhile, he could simultaneously utilise the enormous resources of the Roman Empire to promote his own history as being the complete orthodox truth.

Now the emperor Titus was so desirous that the knowledge of these affairs should be taken from my books alone, that he subscribed his own signature to them, and ordered that they should be published (by Epaphroditus). [J21](#)

Through this process of destruction and selection we are left in the unfortunate position of having to rely solely upon Saul-Josephus for an account of these events in first century AD Judaea. What Jesus-Justus would have said about these events and people it is impossible to tell, but the snippets that have survived in the New Testament and the works of Photius and perhaps even *Antiquities* demonstrate that this alternative history would have related the life and times of the people of Aurania, Bethanya and their capital cities of Palmyra and Gamala.

In addition, the many quotations that Justus apparently made from Plato would suggest that he had a strongly Hellenised Hebrew ancestry, which is exactly what Jesus of Gamala – being a descendant of the Greco-Egyptian Ptolemaic royalty – would also have

had. It should be noted that both Palmyra and Gamala (Umm el-Jimal) were predominantly Greek-speaking cities that also used Aramaic and a smattering of Arabic. (The Seleucid Empire of Persia was substantially Greek up until 63 BC.)

In later eras Saul-Josephus was no doubt joined in his censorship activities by the Catholic Church itself, for I have no doubt that Jesus-Justus' history would have contradicted much of Church doctrine. This would, after all, have been a history of first century Judaea written by the biblical Jesus himself, and I have no doubt that the sugary tale we see in the modern New Testament bears little semblance to the real truth. No other book in the history of the Western world would come close to being as important as the autobiography of Jesus-Justus himself,

but the chances of making that discovery are almost nonexistent. The combined forces of Saul-Josephus and the Catholic Church would have ensured that such an explosive volume never saw the light of day again. The only tantalising glimpse of this alternative history, as written by Jesus-Justus himself, is a fleeting comment by Photius in the 33rd folio of his *Bibliotheca*:

I have read the chronology of Justus of Tiberias, whose title is *The Chronology of the Kings of Judah Which Succeeded One Another*. Justus came out of the city of Tiberias in Galilee. He begins his history from Moses, and ends it not till the death of Agrippa II ... who died in the third year of Trajan, where also his history ends. He is very concise in his language, and slightly passes over those affairs that were most necessary to be insisted on; and being under the Jewish prejudices, as indeed he was himself also a Jew by birth, he makes not the least mention of the appearance of Christ, or what things

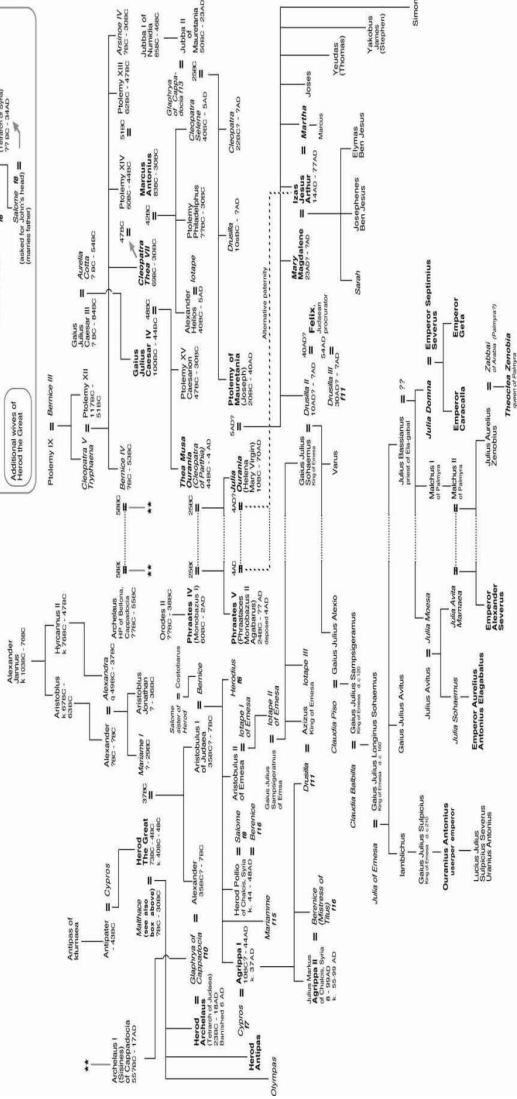
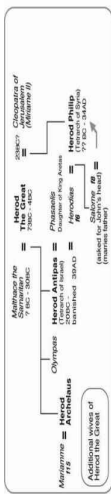
happened to him, or of the wonderful works that he did. He was the son of Pistus ... a slave both to money and to pleasures. Josephus says also, that the history which Justus wrote is, for the main, fabulous (unbelievable), chiefly as to those parts where he describes the Roman war with the Jews, and the taking of Jerusalem.²²

Note here that the subject of Jesus-Justus' history was the chronology of kings, a subject that I am sure was central to the concerns of the biblical Jesus. Note also that Jesus-Justus of Tiberias never mentions the biblical Jesus, which is hardly surprising if he was Jesus himself – no doubt he mentioned the personal pronoun 'I' a lot, instead. Note also that Jesus-Justus was said to have been 'a slave both to money and pleasures', while in a similar vein the biblical Jesus was mocked in Matth 11:19 and Luke 7:34 for being a 'glutton and drunkard, a

friend of tax-collectors and sinners’.

The only problem with this short extract from Photius is that the history of Justus of Tiberias ends with the death of Agrippa II in the third year of Trajan, or 101 AD. This would mean that Jesus-Justus was inordinately old for this era, he being some 95 years old by this date. However, as we saw earlier, it is highly likely that many of the earlier references to Jesus in the New Testament, including that fabled birth in a stable in AD 6, were actually references to John the Baptist. Bishop Irenaeus further asserts that Jesus was actually born in the 41st year of the reign of Augustus, or AD 14. This new birth-date would have made Jesus a venerable 87 years of age when he died, which is old but not impossibly so. Incidentally, this assertion that Jesus-Justus lived into the reign of

Trajan is exactly what Irenaeus also relates, but Photius indicates that his source for this information was Justus of Tiberias, not Irenaeus.



*Fig 11.1 Genealogy of the monarchs
and rulers of Syrio-Judaea.*

Mary Magdalene, Mary Boethus

These explanations mean that Jesus of Gamala was Jesus-Justus of Tiberias, but I have also linked these character(s) back to the biblical Jesus. The evidence for this link is reasonably secure, but perhaps the best proof that Jesus of Gamala was the biblical Jesus comes again from the Judaic Talmud. The Talmud, as we have seen, is ever devious and cryptic in its recording of historical events, so perhaps we should not be looking for a direct record of Jesus' life. However, on this occasion, the evidence is relatively concise and transparent.

So what else does the Talmud

have to say about Jesus? Well, having already demonstrated that Jesus of Gamala was the biblical Jesus in both this and my other works, it was very interesting to discover that the Talmud includes a number of references about this same Jesus of Gamala. Significantly, it also discusses his wife, a topic that Saul-Josephus singularly fails to do. So who was Jesus of Gamala's wife? I held my breath as the pertinent folio of the Talmud was turned, and then my eyes settled upon her name – Martha (of Simon Boethus). Now this was interesting, as the biblical Jesus was closely associated with a Martha – Martha of Bethany. [T23](#)

This was obviously something that required further research, and it did not take long to discover that the links between the biblical Jesus and

this particular Martha went much deeper than I initially expected. Fortunately, Professor Eisenman discusses this lady in some detail in his vast book on the New Testament, as it would seem that there is much confusion over her true name. Many of the references in the Talmud say she was named Martha but some call her Mary (Miriam) instead. We are getting warmer in this research. Professor Eisenman explains that this confusion of names came about because these two daughters of Simon Boethus were, in fact, one and the same as the two sisters described in the New Testament as Mary and Martha of Bethany: the two ladies who were sisters of Lazarus and who sought the assistance of the biblical Jesus in Lazarus' resurrection from the dead. [B24](#)

I have already explained in the

book *Jesus* that this Mary of Bethany was actually Mary Magdalene, the sister-wife of the biblical Jesus (see [fig 11.2](#) for further clarification). This Talmudic confusion between Mary and Martha may actually imply that Jesus was married to both sisters, just as the rules for a Judaic high priest require.

However, this series of connections and explanations may also mean that we have hit the jackpot here. I have long stated that Jesus of Gamala was the biblical Jesus and now, in a combined effort by Professor Eisenman and the Talmud, it would appear that the wife of Jesus of Gamala was actually Mary of Bethany (and possibly Martha of Bethany too). But this Mary was most definitely Mary Magdalene, who I have long equated with the biblical Jesus' sister-wife. Ergo, Jesus of Gamala must be

the biblical Jesus. A further *eureka* moment, I feel.^{B25}

However, Professor Eisenman goes much further in his analysis, and explains that Mary and Martha were actually the daughters of Nicodemus, the rich governor who visited Jesus in the night and brought a vast quantity of very expensive resins and spices for Jesus' burial.^{B26} The relationship between Nicodemus and Jesus remains unexplained in the New Testament, but it is more than likely that this same Nicodemus was actually the Nicodemus ben Gorion (Nicodemus-Boethus) who is mentioned in the Talmud, who was very wealthy indeed, as we shall see.^{T27}

While the gospels admit that Jesus had some strange acquaintances, including a number of rich men and tax-collectors, the presence of

Nicodemus in his entourage is hugely contradictory. Here is Jesus, the man who was preaching that rich men could not enter the kingdom of heaven, and his closest acquaintances include the richest man in Jerusalem. The Talmud says of Nicodemus and his two colleagues, that they were so rich they could maintain the whole of Jerusalem for 21 years on their assets:

Nero then sent against the (Jews) Vespasian the Caesar, who came and besieged Jerusalem for three years. In Jerusalem there were three men of great wealth, Nakdimon ben Gorion, Ben Kalba Shabua and Ben Zizit Hakeseth. These men were in a position to keep the city (alive) for twenty-one years.^{T28}

If Nicodemus was Mary of Bethany's father (and thus possibly Jesus' father too) this would certainly make sense of his actions after Jesus' crucifixion in AD 70. Of course a father (or father-in-

law) would bring expensive gifts to his son's burial, just as Nicodemus is said to have done; and the inordinate amount of spices and resins that the Gospel of John says he brought equates very well with the description of his great wealth in the Talmud.

This mention of the great wealth of Nicodemus occurred just prior to the siege of Jerusalem and such a storehouse of assets would have been very handy at this time, but the rebels (the Zealots and Sicarii under Abba Sikkra, Simon and Judas) burned the vast stores of grain and other foods that these men held, and deliberately set the city on the road to starvation (apparently, to make the population fight). Note, however, how this Nicodemus was displaying his great wealth and influence during the siege of Jerusalem. But, according to

Professor Eisenman, this Nicodemus was the biblical Nicodemus, while his daughters were the biblical Mary and Martha of Bethany. Once again we see evidence that the entire New Testament account was based around the tumultuous events of the Jewish War, and not the comparatively peaceful decades when Pontius Pilate was governor. If this is so, then Jesus must still have been alive in AD 70, but Eisenman studiously ignores this obvious conclusion that his research generates.

The Talmud then goes on to explain that this Mary Magdalene and Martha (of Bethany) were the most wealthy women in Jerusalem and that Mary had used her great wealth to purchase (to bribe?) the position of high priest for her husband. (Or that she bought a dispensation from the

laws on widowhood, so that she could marry Jesus and he could subsequently become high priest.)

As Rabbi Assi said: A whole *tarkab* (75 liters) of dinars, Martha (Mary) daughter of Boethus gave to the King Janai, that he should make Jesus ben Gamala high-priest. (In the Talmudic notes, King Janai is said to be Agrippa II.) [T29](#)

Here, Mary Magdalene and Martha (of Bethany) are called the daughters of Boethus, but Professor Eisenman clearly explains that Nicodemus and Boethus are the same person. We shall look at this huge bribe in a minute, but more important, perhaps, is this sudden elevation of Mary Magdalene from poor prostitute into a hugely rich and influential woman. Seventy-five liters worth of *dinar* coins she gave, in order to make Jesus the high priest of Jerusalem, and that is a large sum of

money. But perhaps a volume does not convey the necessary image here, and so if we translate that volume into weight we would be talking about some 300 kg if the coins were silver, and 500 kg if they were gold. In fact, that is a king's ransom.

According to the Talmud, Mary (Magdalene) and Martha of Boethus were the richest women in Jerusalem, an assertion which may seem incredible, considering the assertions of poverty given by the Christian priesthood, but that is exactly what this venerable book says. But it was not simply Mary and Martha who were stupendously rich, for so too were the parents of John the Baptist, as we have already seen in Chapter III. This may all seem incredible, but do remember that the Talmud comes straight out of the second half of the first century AD,

and so it is recording contemporary events as they happened. This is most certainly not a second-hand story devised during the depressed era of the Dark Ages or the romantic era of the Middle Ages.

If we can develop a sense of trust in these Talmudic authors, then this account of Mary and Martha is quite possibly a true record of these events as they happened; and the first snippet of confirmation comes from the New Testament itself, for the Gospel of Luke says that:

And a certain woman who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary who is called Magdalene, out of whom seven devils were gone forth; and Joanna the wife of Chusa, Herod's steward, and Susanna and many others who ministered unto him out of their substance. [B30](#)

The term 'substance' is actually

translated from *huparconta* *υπαρχοντα* meaning 'property and possessions', and so here is Mary Magdalene and two other women supporting Jesus and the disciples financially from their own pocket! And how was this achieved? Theologians like the venerable Adam Smith will steer a wide birth around this topic and some Bibles even delete the vital and incriminating phrase 'of their substance', as it not only means that the female disciples of Jesus were independently wealthy and hugely influential, it also implies that Jesus was living off immoral earnings (Mary was said by the Church to be a prostitute, and so this verse could imply that Jesus was a pimp). But the more logical truth is that Mary Magdalene was Mary Boethus, and the money she gave to the Fourth Sect

came not from immoral earnings but from her father, Simon Nicodemus-Boethus, the richest man in Judaea.

Many other fantastic tales are told in the Talmud, of the great wealth of Mary (Magdalene). It is said that she had a dowry of a million gold *denarii*, one of the first millionaires; that her bedclothes were worth twelve thousand *denarii*; that two casks of wine a week were available for her supper; and that four hundred *denarii* were spent on her daily perfume and spices.^{T31} No doubt it was from this extravagant perfume allowance that the biblical Mary Magdalene of Bethany obtained the expensive flask of spikenard to anoint the biblical Jesus.^{B32}

We also know that Mary (Magdalene) and Martha of Boethus (and Bethany) were high-born,

aristocratic ladies, for Mary not only owned a palace in Jerusalem, she also had a carpet laid out between her palace and the Temple. This is, no doubt, the origin of the red-carpet treatment for celebrities:

On Yom Kippur, carpets were laid from the doorway of (Mary's) house (palace) to the entrance of the Temple, so that her feet would not be exposed. But they were.³³

Quite obviously, Mary Magdalene and Martha (of Bethany) became stupendously rich because of their father, Boethus-Nicodemus, who was the richest man in Judaea. However, this begs the question as to who, exactly, this wealthy family were, and whether they can be found in the historical record. This is a topic that will be explored shortly.

However, there is another

subject to be explored here, for we also have a situation where Mary (and Martha) was accused of buying the position of high priest for her husband, Jesus of Gamala. While this may initially sound like an outrageous accusation, it actually dovetails nicely with some of the evidence we have already uncovered and it begins to answer some rather awkward questions: which is always a good test for a theory. In this case, the Talmud is speculating upon which law was changed in order that Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus) could become high priest. Was this really a bribe to effect a change in the marriage laws, as they suggest?

Well, Jesus of Gamala was the son of Judas-Zamaris of Gamala and, as the name might suggest, these people were of the tribe of Judah (as was the

biblical Jesus). But only Levites could become high priest, not Judites, which is why we have that long and complicated section in Hebrews 7:12-22 concerning the need for a change in the law so that the biblical Jesus could become high priest, as we saw in a previous chapter. In the end, it was decided that an election and an oath were better than a hereditary inheritance, which is how Jesus became high priest of Jerusalem in AD 64 – a fact that is not exactly explained in Sunday-school lessons.

So the Talmud was right, in that there *was* a change in the law here, but it is Saul-Josephus in his Epistle to the Hebrews who gives us the full explanation about exactly which law was changed: it was the succession laws, rather than the marriage laws. Thus the extract from the Talmud, about

Mary of Boethus purchasing the high priesthood for her husband, Jesus of Gamala, has to be recalling the same event that is detailed in Hebrews chapter 7; except that in the latter version the new high priest was actually the biblical Jesus. Therefore, it must be obvious to any sentient being that Jesus of Gamala must be the biblical Jesus; and yet Professor Eisenman, having run through much of this same material, studiously fails to make this obvious deduction. But Eisenman is by no means a simpleton, so why does he not even mention this possibility?

The answer is that despite his plea for an open mind, this equivalence would directly contradict a fundamental Christian doctrine that he still holds dear, and so Eisenman's mind snaps shut once more. The

orthodox interpretation of the New Testament says that Jesus died in AD 33, and thus the anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany (Mary Magdalene) in the Gospel of John would have occurred in the same year. However, in complete contrast we also know that Jesus of Gamala was a contemporary of Josephus Flavius during the Jewish Revolt of the AD 60s. So there is a complete generation gap here, which cannot be filled by any amount of wishful thinking or fudging the data. The New Testament records AD 33 for Jesus' elevation to high priest, while the Talmud records the AD 60s; so which is correct?

The answer is that Mary of Boethus' purchase of the high priesthood for her husband is actually recorded within the list of high-priests of Jerusalem, where there is a record

of Jesus ben Gamaliel (Jesus ben Gamala) being elected in the year AD 64.^{J34} So Mary's anointing of King Jesus, as recorded in the Gospel of John, actually occurred in AD 64; but that is 31 years after the Christian Church maintains that he died. Remember that the biblical account of Mary Magdalene of Bethany anointing Jesus with expensive oils is actually a component of the traditional ritual for the installation of a Judaic king (or priest-king).^{B35} This is what the title 'christ' means: the anointed one, the king, and this is why the biblical Jesus was subsequently honoured and titled as a 'King of the Jews' in the biblical texts. As the respected historian Robert Graves says:

There need be no doubt that Jesus was anointed and crowned King of Israel; but the gospel editors have done their best to conceal

this, for political reasons, even while referring to him as 'Christ' and 'The Chosen One'.³⁶

It is clear from this evidence that the crucifixion date of AD 33 is totally incorrect, and yet this controversial conclusion is in total agreement with previous evidence we have seen and also with the assertions of Bishop Irenaeus – that King Jesus actually died during the third year of the reign of Trajan (ie: AD 101).

As an aside, while it is entirely possible that Mary (Magdalene) paid for King Jesus' elevation to the position of high priest, there is another reason why she may have been giving money to King Janai (Agrippa II). Saul-Josephus records that Jesus of Gamala fled from him (more likely, fled from the Romans) in about AD 67 and sought refuge with King Agrippa II, but was ransomed. Vespasian had

likewise ordered Jesus' death, but Agrippa again ransomed his life, and the king no doubt used Mary's money on both occasions. Ransoming a life was fairly standard in this era, as it was a common way in which Roman commanders like Vespasian could amass wealth:

You say it is I (Saul-Josephus) who am a wicked man. But then, for what reason was it that King Agrippa procured your life (Jesus-Justus' life) when you were condemned to die by Vespasian? ... (and why did Agrippa) order you to be put to death, (but) granted you a pardon at the earnest desire of (his sister) Berenice? [J37](#)

All of this being pardoned by Vespasian and Agrippa, having just been condemned to death, must have cost an absolute fortune to organise, and perhaps it was this expenditure that the Talmud was commenting on.

Mary not only purchased King Jesus' elevation to the high priesthood, but also purchased his freedom from both Vespasian and Agrippa.


Historical account

We appear to have established a concrete connection here, between the biblical Mary Magdalene and Martha of Bethany and the Talmud's Mary and Martha of Boethus, who were the wife or wives of King Jesus of Gamala. But although this does add more information to the established gospel accounts, in that we now know that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were definitely married, this does not help to place these characters into a real historical context. So can we also identify these same two ladies within the historical record?



Fig 11.2 Mary Magdalene and Martha of Bethany, Bernardino Luini. Note how Mary Magdalene is always depicted in Renaissance art with an alabaster jar, to anoint Jesus, because it was tacitly acknowledged even in this early era that Mary Magdalene was Mary of Bethany. The Mary Window at Chartres Cathedral, which dates from the twelfth century, similarly explains that Mary of Bethany was Mary Magdalene. The alabaster jar that Mary carries contained the oils of spikenard that were used to anoint Jesus as King of Judaeo-Syria. Martha is giving the 'John gesture', the single-fingered salute that seems to be closely associated with John the Baptist.

Unfortunately, we now have three surnames for Mary, but none of these appear to give us her true family name. She was surnamed as 'Magdalene' in the New Testament; 'Nicodemus' in the *Lamentations Rabbah* and the Talmud; and 'Boethus' in the works of Josephus Flavius and the Talmud.

The name 'Magdalene' comes from the Hebrew and Egyptian *magdal*  meaning 'tower'. This title, as explained previously, was derived both from the pyramids and from the phallic symbolism that was extensively used in early Judaism. Judaism venerated phallic symbols, as in the idol venerated by Queen Maakhah Tamar in 2 Chronicles 15:16, which was actually a phallus.

'Nicodemus' is the name given to the tax-collector (publican) friend of King Jesus, who the Talmud has

identified as being the father of Mary and Martha and the richest man in Jerusalem. But this name is also probably a title. It is derived from *nike* νικος meaning 'victory', and *demos* δημοσ meaning 'people', and so the title simply means 'Victory for the People'. This is an apt title for a leader of a revolutionary movement, like that of Jesus and his disciples of the Galilean Sect, and so it is highly unlikely that this is a true family name.

Likewise, the name 'Boethus' is also probably a title. This name was probably derived from *boe* βον meaning 'call' or 'cry', and *theos* θεος meaning 'god', and so the complete title is 'Call for God'. This name may also be something to do with the Nazarene belief that the 'Primeval Adam', the founding father-figure of the Nazarene, came from Boeotia in

Greece.³⁸ There were a few high priests of Jerusalem who were called 'ben Boethus' (son of Boethus), but no high priests who actually carried that name. It would appear, therefore, that this was a title that simply denoted a founding father-figure and priest who 'cried out loud for god', and it was not a family name as such.

While frustrating, this use of hypocorisms or nicknames is entirely typical of the Talmud and the New Testament, and so it is not so surprising that we still don't know the true ancestry of Mary and Martha of Boethus-Nicodemus. However, we do know some important characteristics about these ladies and their family. Firstly we know that the title 'Boethus' became associated with a new sect of that name, whose early first century founders were called Boethus and

Zadok. One of the maxims of this sect was:

Be not like the servants who serve their masters for the sake of the wages, but be rather like those who serve without thought of receiving wages.³⁹

This may sound like the Boethusians were an ascetic sect who shunned wealth, but this is not so, for they were also said to have attracted the wealthy, used gold and silver crockery and cutlery, and despised the asceticism of the Pharisees. In fact, they may have ‘served without thought of wages’ simply because they were so stinking rich that they did not have to worry about money. The Talmud mentions that King Monobazus of Adiabene did very much the same kind of thing:

King Monobazus had all the handles of all the vessels used on Yom Kippur made of gold.

He also made of gold the base of the vessels, the rims of the vessels, the handles of the vessels, and the handles of the knives. T40

Thus Monobazus of Adiabene was indulging himself in the very same way that the Boethusian sect did.*² This is a tentative suggestion that the Boethusian sect, and therefore Nicodemus and Mary Magdalene too, were somehow related to Monobazus, the brother-husband of Queen Helena of Adiabene. We shall see more evidence for this later.

So, the Boethusian sect was not poor, but stupefyingly rich, just as Nicodemus-Boethus was himself. Perhaps a better analogy for this sect might be the Knights Templar, who similarly shunned personal wealth and called themselves the 'Poor Knights of Christ', but were nevertheless inordinately wealthy as a community.

But, as we have seen, the likely forerunner of the Templars were the Essene, and so it is entirely possible that the founders of the Boethusian sect, Boethus and Zadok, were none other than Judas-Zamaris and Zadok, the early first century founders of the Galilean Sect (remember that the name 'Zadok' is the same as 'Justus').

Likewise, the Galilean Sect was also not poor, but then neither was King Jesus. As we saw in the last chapter, the gospels say it was Jesus himself who was the tax-collector, banker and oppressor of the poor; while Josephus Flavius records that Jesus maintained a castle and a private army. So while Jesus could be said to have been poor because he was a Nazarene-Ebionite, a name derived from the Aramaic *ebyonim* meaning 'poor'; and poor because

members of the sect gave up their wealth to the community, as did the Templars, the family of Jesus were obviously very rich. The Talmud only serves to add to this apparent wealth by informing us that the biblical Jesus was anointed as king by the wealthiest woman in Jerusalem (who was probably his sister), and then married her too. Jesus was certainly not one of the oppressed, he was one of the aristocracy, one of the high priesthood, and an anointed king too. For readers who disbelieve this interpretation, here is the Talmud once more:

On the eve of the Passover Jesus the Nazarene was hanged. But forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'He is going forth to be stoned because he has practised sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy (the abandonment of Judaism). Any one who can say anything in his favour, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.' But since nothing was brought

forward in his favour he was hanged on the eve of the Passover! Was he not an enticer, concerning whom Scripture says, ‘Neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him?’ With Jesus the Nazarene however it was different, for he was connected with the government and royalty.^{T41}

There are several things we can deduce from this statement:

- i. Unlike the assertions of Timothy Freke, Peter Gandy and others, King Jesus must have existed as a real person, otherwise the Talmud would have had no need to mention his name (and this paragraph was most certainly not a Christian interpolation into the Talmud!).

ii. King Jesus' Judaism must have been radically different to orthodox Judaism for him to have been accused of sorcery and soliciting apostasy; and Jesus' creed *was* different, for it was more firmly based upon the original Egyptian ancestry of Judaism.

iii. King Jesus was again said to have been connected with the government and with royalty, and so he must have been a Judaeon aristocrat and prince. This is just the sort of person who can afford a castle and an army, as

Josephus records.

- iv. The quote above also states that, ‘Scripture said that you should not spare nor conceal such an enticer (an enticer away from orthodox Judaism); however, with Jesus it was different, for he was of the royalty.’

This sentence implies that because King Jesus was royal, his execution had to be covered up (concealed). This is why the Talmud does not overtly tell us who this Jesus really was and how he was ‘executed’; a concealment that played directly into the hands of

Johanan-Saul-Josephus and his emerging creed of Simple Judaism, because the latter did not want to reveal the royal connections of Jesus either. In other words, it was Jewish priestly spin and dissembling that fostered the 'Jesus the pauper' myth as we know it today; but this secrecy and spin is not too surprising, given that Johanan, the creator of modern Judaism, was actually Saul-Josephus, the creator of Simple Judaism.

It is amazing, is it not, how far powerful organisations like Judaism

and Christianity can manipulate and destroy history. Here are the richest and most powerful couple in Jerusalem during the mid to late first century AD, and the vast majority of Christians in the modern world think they were a carpenter and his whore!! And what of the role of Judaism in all this? Judaism owns the Talmud, and Judaic scholars have pored over these texts for centuries. Did none of the later rabbis see the obvious links and associations with the gospel accounts? Did they keep quiet, in order not to upset the powerful Christian lobby: be that the Emperor Constantine, the early despotic Popes, the oppressive Medieval Vatican or the recent power base of Christian America? Did everyone decide to let sleeping dogs lie?

If they did, it is about time we

changed our perceptions of biblical history, for here is an exotic tale of royal families, inordinate wealth, ultimate power, and the manipulation of the masses for the maintenance and expansion of that power. Never mind *The da Vinci Code's* trivial assertion that Jesus may have been married, here is a real cryptic code that has lain undisturbed for nearly two thousand years.

Helena of Adiabene

We have established that the surnames used for Mary Magdalene and Martha are not entirely reliable, for they may all be hypocorisms. So who, then, were Mary and Martha of Bethany, the daughters of Nicodemus-Boethus, in the real historical record? The short answer is that we do not know for sure

– however, we can make an educated guess.

King Jesus, as I have suggested previously, was of Egyptian and Persian descent, and was known as the ‘Egyptian False Prophet’ by Saul-Josephus. Likewise, Mary Magdalene, in her veneration of the phallus (the *magdal* tower), must also have harboured some Egyptian influences. Since I have long maintained that Jesus and Mary were brother and sister, and had a sibling betrothal in the royal Egyptian custom, their similar background and ancestry is not too surprising. We are also looking for a family that had alternative Judaic beliefs, like those of the idiosyncratic Galileans, and who were connected in some fashion with the royal line of Queen Thea Muse. So which very wealthy family in the historical record

of Jerusalem, in this era, had unusual beliefs, a penchant for incest and an Egypto-Persian ancestry?

One family stands out in this regard, and that is the family of Queen Helena of Adiabene, her brother-husband King Monobazus and their son called Izates. Helena was the queen from Adiabene, a province in north western Parthia (Persia), who converted her family and her people to Judaism and sent money to Jerusalem for famine relief (in AD 47-48). She also sent huge sums of money for the Temple and its furniture. It was Queen Helena who commissioned the huge solid gold *menorah* (candelabra) for the Temple of Jerusalem, the very same *menorah* (and temple funds) that are portrayed being captured on the Arch of Titus in Rome and which underpinned the success of the Flavian

emperors (Vespasian and Titus) as a ruling dynasty. This colossal wealth also paid for the construction of the Colosseum in Rome, and so the riches of Helena of Adiabene do have a lasting memorial. Considering the huge expense of the Colosseum, the wealth that Helena gave to the Temple must have been extraordinary.

But it was also Queen Helena who built the finest palace in Jerusalem, and so if anyone could be considered the richest woman in Jerusalem it was Queen Helena of Adiabene. So, could Mary Magdalene (Mary of Boethus-Nicodemus) have been related to Queen Helena? Actually, this is not as unlikely a proposition as it at first seems, for we have already seen evidence that the Boethusian Sect of Nicodemus and Mary were using gold crockery and

cutlery, in much the same fashion as King Monobazus, Queen Helena's brother-husband.

Further links, this time between Queen Helena and the Galilean Sect, can be seen in the Talmudic account of Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi, who says that Queen Helena became a Nazorite (a Nazarene) for fourteen years.^{T42} Thus, it would seem that Queen Helena had joined the very same Judaic sect that the biblical Jesus and his family belonged to. Jesus was not of Nazareth (the



Fig 11.3 The menorah of Queen Helena, as depicted on the triumphal arch of Titus, Rome.

town), he was a Nazarene (the sect), as Matthew 2:23 makes clear; while the rest of his followers were also in the Nazarene sect, as Acts 24:5 demonstrates. But since the biblical Jesus was Jesus of Gamala, then the entire Galilean Sect was also allied to the Nazarene Sect. In fact, since the Arabic word Nazrani can refer to both Christians and fish (Pisces), the Galileans and Nazarene sects appear to be inseparable.

The Talmud's account continues, and it is said that during Queen Helena's probationary period for Nazareneship, she contracted an 'impurity':

Does Rabbi Judah agree that Queen Helena contracted impurity, in which case his statement concurs with Beth Shammai's opinion, or does he deny that she contracted impurity, in which case his statement concurs with Beth Hillel's opinion? Beth Hillel ruled

that she must observe Naziriteship for a further seven years. [T43](#)

It is initially said that the ‘impurity’ was something to do with being absent from Judaea during the first seven years, but there is an alternative explanation in Nazir 19b which indicates that the first transgression was being absent from Israel, and the second was a ‘ritual defilement’ of some nature. The exact nature of this ‘defilement’ is not explained here, but it was not difficult for women to become defiled according to Mosaic law. Whatever the problem was, it meant that Queen Helena was compelled to do another seven years of initiation to cleanse herself before becoming a true Nazarene. The only clue to the nature of this ‘defilement’ is that Helena also donated a gold dish to the Temple:

Queen Helena also made a dish of gold on which was written the section of the Sotah. [T44](#)

The exact form that this dish took will be explained in the chapter on Palmyra. The inscription from the Sotah that was engraved upon this dish was related to the ‘unfaithful wife’ and so this tablet was used when rabbinic judgements were made on infidelity. So Queen Helena may have been ‘unfaithful’, which is not too surprising considering the convoluted consanguinity rules that these Near Eastern royal families utilised.^{*3} This may also be why the Catholic Church denigrated Mary Magdalene as a ‘whore’, and we see evidence of this in the very verses that were used to demonstrate that she was a whore:

And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called

Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils. [B45](#)

It may be that the seven ‘devils’ (evil spirits) that proved Mary (Magdalene) to be a whore were linked in some manner to the seven years of penance (and initiation) that Queen Helena performed to atone for some marital or reproductive transgression. In the book *Cleopatra*, I explained that these ‘devils’ were also something to do with the Seven Muses – the seven Greek liberal arts for ladies – of poetry (Calliope), music (Euterpe), history (Clio), lyrics (Erato), dancing (Terpsichore), comedy (Thalia) and astronomy (Ourania).

It is possible that the candidate had to study these seven arts before becoming a Nazarene. But the Talmud gives no clues to the inner philosophy of this sect, it simply states that a

Nazarene had to abide by three main rules:

1. To not poll the hair.
2. To not drink wine (except for a sip).
- 3 To avoid ritual defilement.

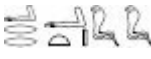
These rules are merely a superficial gloss, which suggests that the Talmud did not want to discuss the Nazarene ritual or creed; or perhaps the learned rabbis and sages did not know the inner secrets of the Nazarene Sect. Whatever the case, one can be sure that there was more to Nazarene beliefs and teachings than this, and we shall discover a few of these teachings shortly.

However, the Talmud then goes into its usual paroxysm of introspective

navel-gazing, when it tries to understand what 'wine' means. It is the product of the grape, but does that exclude the eating of a pip or a vine-leaf? Is the skin of a grape to be regarded as the same as the pulp? And what of a twig from the vine, is that to be regarded as 'wine' and to be banned too? But some Rabbis say that a volume of wine as great as an olive is acceptable; but if this wine is soaked into bread, then how can we be sure how much wine is in the bread? Does this make bread and wine a banned item? This pointless discussion goes on for chapter after chapter and is typical of Talmudic discussions. One imagines the Temple as being a gentlemen's club of old duffers, who have nothing better to do with their time than to discuss the minutiae of semantics. It is no wonder that a few

young bucks were trying to shake up the orthodox system.

So Queen Helena was a Nazarene, just as King Jesus was. However, the Talmud goes on to explain, in its own idiosyncratic manner, that Mary Magdalene was also a Nazarene, just like Helena. In its usual obfuscative style, the Talmud calls Mary 'Miriam, the dresser of women's hair'. This phrase was derived from 'Miriam Magaddela Nashaia' (or Miriam Magbalah Nesaiyr מרים מגבלה נזיר) meaning 'Miriam the Hair Dresser'; but the phrase is simply a play on words for 'Miriam Magdalene Nazarene', or 'Mary Magdalene the Nazarene'. See the book *Cleopatra* for details. So both ladies were Nazarene, and so again we see the close similarity between Mary and Queen Helena.

The origin of the name for the Nazarene Sect is quite interesting. The Concordance says that it was derived from *Nazoraios* Ναζωραῖος meaning 'separate', which may imply the seclusion of a monastic order like the Essene of Qumran. Hippolytus of Rome, a third century theologian and historian, says that the Nazarene were called the Naasseni (Heb. *nakhash* נחש , Gr. *naass* ναασσ) or the Ophites Οφίς, with both names meaning 'snake'. The Nazarenes were certainly associated with the symbolism of the snake, and since the Galilean Sect must have had an Egyptian ancestry it is worth noting that the primary symbol of the Hyksos Egyptians of Lower Egypt was the *uraeus* (*urra-t*) , the emblem of the snake. The Manichaeans went one stage further, and regarded the snake as a direct manifestation of

Jesus.⁴⁶ The Naasseni were also called the Peratai, meaning ‘wanderers’, a name that quite befits the travels of the families of Thea Muse and Helena. Hippolytus was actually writing about a late first century AD ‘Christian’ sect called the Naasseni-Ophites, rather than a Judaic sect called the Nazarene (Naassoreans), but as we shall see the former must have been founded upon the ashes of the latter.

Hippolytus goes on to refute the Nazarene philosophy as ‘heretical’, but in doing so he conveniently preserves some of it for posterity, something that the Talmud singularly fails to do. The primary thing to note is that the Nazarene were Platonist Gnostics, who hailed Homer as a prophet, and they professed a deep understanding of nature and the divine. Gnosticism was derived from *gnosis* γνῶσις meaning

‘knowledge’ or ‘science’, and so Hero of Alexandria, the Leonardo da Vinci of the first century AD, would have been regarded as a Gnostic rather than maverick mathematician and mechanic. Under the guise of the Peratai, the Nazarenes were also known as adept astrologers.

According to Hippolytus, the Nazarene Sect venerated a god and a son of god who was known as the Primaeval Adam, a threefold being who was somehow incarnated as Jesus and was said to be a hermaphrodite. This is significant, for the origins of the Galilean Sect have already been identified as being closely linked to Pharaoh Akhenaton and his brother Moses (TuthMoses), and Akhenaton similarly styled himself as androgynous; while in the book *Cleopatra*, it was explained how Jesus

requested that his disciples should become eunuchs. Likewise, in a later chapter, we shall see many similarities between the Nazarene Sect and Elagabalus, the Roman emperor who also styled himself as androgynous or a hermaphrodite.⁴⁷ The strong Egyptian element in Nazarene philosophy can also be seen in this extract from Hippolytus:

These are the summaries of very numerous discourses which (the Naassene Sect) asserts James the brother of the Lord handed down to Mariamme (Magdalene) ...

The (Nazarene) assert that the Egyptians ... are of greater antiquity than all mankind, and who were the first to proclaim to all the rest of men the rites and orgies of ... the gods, as well as the appearance and energies (of things) that are sacred and venerable; and for those who are not initiated, the unspeakable mysteries of Isis.

The latter, however, are (nothing less than) what was sought and snatched away, namely, the penis of Osiris. They say that

Osiris is water, but the seven-robed nature, encircled and arrayed with seven mantles of ethereal texture – for so they call the planetary stars, allegorizing and calling them ethereal robes – is as it were the changeable generation, and is exhibited as the creature transformed by the ineffable and unportrayable and inconceivable and figureless one (god). And this, (the Nazarene) say, is what is declared in Scripture, ‘The just will fall seven times, and rise again.’^{B48} For these falls, he says, are the changes of the stars, moved by (god) who puts all things in motion.

For Osiris, (the Nazarene) say, is in temples in front of Isis; and his penis stands exposed, looking downwards, and crowned with all its own fruits of things that are made. And (he affirms) that such stands (of penises) are not only in the most hallowed temples chief of idols, but also for the information of all; it is a light not set under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, proclaiming its message upon the housetops, in all byways, and all streets.⁴⁹

Here is the basis of the Nazarene creed of Jesus and James, which can be seen to be largely Egyptian in both style and

thought.

Firstly, it is highly significant that the creed was handed down from James (the brother of Jesus) to Mary Magdalene. Remember that it was Mary Magdalene who was specifically singled out in the Talmud as being a Nazarene, and here she is being specifically addressed as a leader of the Naassoreans (Nazarenes). It is highly likely, therefore, that the Galilean and Nazarene sects were one and the same

Secondly, we then have a reasonable summary of Egyptian theology, including Isis' search for the penis of her brother-husband, Osiris, and the importance of the movement of the planets and stars (astrology-astronomy) through the seven heavens (the seven robes). Note that the 'fall' (possibly of Lucifer) is actually the

apparent fall of a planetary body down towards the horizon, as I have speculated in a previous work. This may actually refer to the change in the astrological Great Month, which occurs every 2,140 years or so.

Lastly, there is the veneration of the penis as a life-giving force, and this is an idol or image that is apparently used by all of the people, rather than a secret totem that has been relegated to the depths of the Holy of Holies in the Temple. This is reminiscent of the phallic Benben stone and the phallus of Atum, which were both progenitors of life and fertility. It was not originally known if the penis of Atum was for public worship or private veneration by the priesthood, but a find at the Temple of Hatchepsut at Deir el-Bahri in Luxor was soon to answer that question.

When this temple was excavated in the nineteenth century, a large cache of votive wooden penises was discovered, which demonstrates that ordinary people brought these fertility offerings to the Temple. But, such were the moral codes of the day, these penises were all packed away in store rooms in the deep recesses of the British Museum, where they remain to this day. However, it would appear that the Nazarene Sect (the Galileans) of Jesus and Mary were using images and idols of the penis in much the same way as the early Egyptians, and possibly even doing so in the Temple of Jerusalem. This may be one reason for the Talmud saying that Jesus practised sorcery with his penis – it was not simply his penis, but thousands of them.

Incidentally, another interesting

part of Nazarene philosophy is that the Garden of Eden is actually a reference to the human brain:

They assert, however, that Eden is the brain, as it were, bound and tightly fastened in encircling robes, as if in heaven. But they suppose that man, as far as the head only, is Paradise, therefore that the river (the nervous system), which proceeds out of Eden, from the brain, is divided into four branches (the arms and legs).⁵² (my brackets)

In addition, Nazarene philosophy refers to the brain as a ‘labyrinth’, and so the fabled labyrinth of the Minotaur may simply be a reference to the convoluted folds of the brain – as may be the maze-like patterns of Celtic artistry. Some might also detect elements of Kabalistic thought here, with the Sefirot or Divine Attributes also being superimposed on the outline of a man.

But there is a much more convincing descendant of this particular Nazarene doctrine, for it would definitely explain the curious artistry of Michelangelo, and therefore demonstrate that he too was a Nazarene-Galilean. In the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo drew the image of god reaching out to Adam, an element of the ceiling that became known as the 'Creation of Adam', but the outline of this god-figure is quite obviously the outline of a human brain. According to Nazarene philosophy, Michelangelo is indicating that god lived in Eden (in the brain), which was described as being in heaven and having encircling robes – which is exactly what Michelangelo has painted.

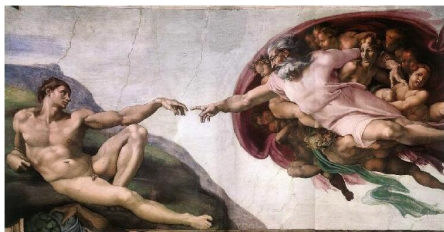


Fig 11.4 Michelangelo's concept of god as a human brain, composed of 'encircling robes'. This is a component of Jesus' Nazarene philosophy and it may indicate that 'god is all in the mind'.

However, if we take this same philosophy one stage further and regard the brain as being the seat of the mind, then Michelangelo might also have been indicating, to all those thousands of people who view this image every year, that 'god is all in the mind'. Thus Michelangelo may have been both a Nazarene heretic and an Atheist, while covering his tracks so expertly that none but an initiated few

would ever know about it.

Simon Boethus

Further evidence that Queen Helena was linked to the Galileans can be seen in Saul-Josephus' *Jewish War*. Here, he maintains that two sons of Queen Helena, Kenedeus and Monobazus, fought for the rebels during the Jewish Revolt, and were eventually captured by Vespasian after Jerusalem fell. **J53** In other words, relatives of Queen Helena were definitely working for the same theopolitical goals as were the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James.

In addition, the supposed pronouncements of King Monobazus himself, as quoted in the Talmud, lend further support to this argument for a link, for they have a definite biblical

ring to them:

It is related of King Monobazus that he dissipated all his own money ... in years of scarcity. His brothers ... came to him and said to him, 'Your father saved money and added to the treasures of his fathers, and you are squandering them.' He replied: 'My fathers stored up below and I am storing above ... my fathers stored in a place which can be tampered with, but I have stored in a place which cannot be tampered with ... my fathers stored something which produces no fruits, but I have stored something which does produce fruits ... my fathers gathered treasures of money, but I have gathered treasures of souls ... my fathers gathered for this world, but I have gathered for the future world.'

[T54](#)

Now the Talmud commentary likes to see numerous verses and sayings from the Old Testament in this quote. But, as readers can probably see for themselves, in reality Monobazus' philosophy comes straight out of the New Testament. But since the Jews do

not acknowledge the New Testament as a holy book they cannot use it as a Talmudic reference, and so they have lost the whole historical origins and rationale of Monobazus' ideology. The New Testament equivalents of this quote are:

Do not lay up treasures for yourselves upon earth, where moth and rust corrupts and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

[B55](#)

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. That they do good, that they be rich in good works and ready to distribute ... laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. [B56](#)



*Fig 11.5 Sarcophagi with Judaic horns in the imposing pyramid tomb at Al Bara, south of Aleppo. The wreaths on the front of the sarcophagi on the right also contain concealed Gnosto-Christian Chi Rho **XP** symbols. Clearly, these pyramid tombs are either Gnosto-Judaic or Judaeo-Christian.*

In other words, the quote by King Monobazus in the Talmud comes directly from the New Testament or, to place a more lateral spin on this discovery, the New Testament comes directly from Monobazus. At the very least, it would appear that the family of Queen Helena and King Monobazus

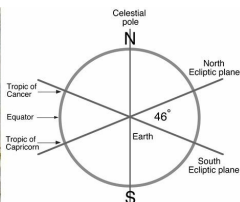
had a great deal in common with the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James, and so it is highly likely that Jesus' wife, Mary Magdalene (Mary of Boethus), was descended from this inordinately wealthy family.

Not to be outdone by all of these diverse strands of evidence, Eusebius, the father of Christian history, maintains that Queen Helena was buried in three pyramidal tombs outside Jerusalem. William Whiston suggests that one of these tombs may be the so-called Tomb of Zechariah in the Kidron Valley.⁵⁷ This gives us another link to Syria and to Palmyra, for the Palmyrans also used tower tombs for their dead, while if we detour westwards we find that the people of Dana and Al-Bara south of Aleppo were using very similar Greco-Egyptian pyramid tombs. Significantly,

the sarcophagi in these tombs all bore the four horns of the Judaic altar, which confirms that these pyramid tombs were actually Judaic monuments. See [fig 11.5](#) and the colour section for images of these tombs.

Interestingly, these tombs at Al-Bara are not only Judaic, but they are also adorned with a very subtle Chi Rho (XP) Labarum, the cross-shaped symbol of Christianity. Does this make the occupants of these pyramid tombs Christian? Not necessarily, for the Chi Rho actually predates Christianity and was another of those Pagan symbols that were conveniently adopted by Simple Judaism, as it expanded into the Greek world. Within Christianity the Chi Rho is said to represent the first two letters of the title 'Christ' (Χριστός), but within early Platonism it symbolised the celestial and ecliptic

planes or equators which ‘encircle’ the Earth. Early Chi Rhos used a cross with an acute angle, denoting the 23° angle between the two cosmic planes, whereas Christian symbolism preferred a full 90° cross. In fact, despite what is usually said about it, the early Platonic Chi Rho symbology better resembles the 46° variation in the ecliptic equator, as it moves relative to the celestial equator during the course of a year, defining the extent of the two tropics as it does so. 58



*Fig 11.6 A Chi Rho Labarum. (Left).
The cosmic imagery it represents. (Right)*

In which case, in New Testament terms the lower extent of the Chi Rho cross would represent the birth of Jesus (the winter solstice), while the upper extent would represent the birth of John the Baptist (the summer solstice). In addition, the upright P (r) symbol in the Platonic Chi Rho XP has been changed from a *rhabdos* ραβδος, a ‘pole’ or ‘rod’, the axis of the Earth, into the P (r) in Christ Χριστος. Nevertheless, the original celestial symbolism of the XP is still visible, complete with the celestial pole and the tropics clearly marked on a globe of the Earth.

The meaning of the term that Emperor Constantine chose for this newly adopted Christian symbol, the Labarum, is equally unknown. However, since the Emperor was now endorsing Simple Judaism, a possible

source might be the Hebrew *labia* לביא meaning 'lion', which was derived from the Egyptian *labu* (*rabu*) . This would represent a reference to the Lion of Judah, a symbol of King Jesus. In fact, the Labah Labia לביא לבה would refer to the Coeur de Lion, the Lion Heart; although it has to be said that the Chi Rho hardly resembles a lion.

Evocative monuments such as these imposing Egypto-Judaic pyramid-tombs at Al-Bara demonstrate the clear cultural links that existed between Queen Helena and the Syrio-Egyptian ancestry of Thea Muse Ourania and the biblical Jesus. This family was of Egyptian descent, which is why Jesus was disparagingly called the 'Egyptian False Prophet', and so a fitting resting place would indeed be a pyramid-tomb.

However, there is one problem with an association between Queen Helena and Mary Magdalene, for it is highly unlikely that Mary could be Queen Helena herself as the latter was of an earlier generation. Instead, if there was indeed a link between these families, then Queen Helena would have to have been Mary the Virgin. As was demonstrated earlier, it is likely that Mary Magdalene was Mary the Virgin's daughter, and when using the arguments presented here, then Mary Magdalene would also have been the daughter of Queen Helena. This suggestion is supported by the fact that Queen Helena indulged in a similar Egyptian-style incestuous marriage as both Mary Magdalene (who married her brother, King Jesus), and Queen Thea Muse Ourania (who married her son, Phraataces).

Note that this sibling marriage between Queen Helena and King Monobazus was not a Parthian (Persian) custom, for Queen Thea Muse Ourania and her son Phraataces were forcibly exiled from Parthia for arranging a very similar incestuous marriage. This demonstrates that Helena, like Thea Muse, must have had an Egyptian ancestry, where sibling marriage for the royalty was not simply a quaint custom but a compulsory element of royal tradition. It also demonstrates that Queen Helena was most probably not resident in Adiabene as we know it, as this region lies within Parthia. Since Thea Muse had already been exiled from Parthia for having an incestuous marriage, how could Queen Helena have persevered with her incestuous marriage in the same region?

The answer to this problem is that the term 'Adiabene' was being used as a pseudonym for Parthia, for it means virtually the same thing, and it was also being used retrospectively. Just as Thea Muse may well have been called Queen Thea Muse of Parthia, Queen Helena was likewise being called Helena of Adiabene (Parthia), but these titles did not imply that either of these queens still lived in those regions. These titles were simply convenient anachronisms to demonstrate the ancestry of these monarchs, but they have the unfortunate side-effect of diverting our attention to a false location in the east. In actual fact, it is my belief that both Thea Muse and Helena were living in eastern Syria by this time, in Palmyra, having been forcibly exiled there by the Parthian people.

Note also that Queen Helena appears to have been the dominant royal in her country, just as Queen Thea Muse was in hers. In an era dominated by male royals and male emperors, these two queens who ruled over their respective small nations stand out as being highly unusual. This independence may have been due to their being genuinely powerful women, in the guise of their direct ancestor, Queen Cleopatra, but it may have been assisted by their both being widows at this time. Here is a snippet from the Talmud that indicates that Helena was also a widow:

Queen Helena lost her jewelery, and Rabbi Samuel, who had just arrived from Rome, found it. A proclamation was posted throughout the city offering a certain sum of money as a reward for the restoration of the jewels within thirty days, but if they were handed in after thirty days the finder was to

lose his head. Rabbi Samuel waited and returned the jewels after thirty days. Said the queen: 'Have you not heard of the proclamation?' 'Yes,' answered Samuel, 'but I am demonstrating that I do not fear thee, but only the Merciful (god).' ^{T59}

This may sound like the haughty arrogance expected of a royal looking for lost jewels, but it is probably not. Talmudic law says that a bride must find her dowry (called her jewels) within one year; but if she is a widow she only has 30 days to find them (presumably she is expected to already have some 'jewels' from her last marriage). ^{T60} It is likely that Helena was looking for her dowry jewels within this 30-day period, not her 'lost' jewels and so she may well have been a widow, and if she did not get her dowry returned within 30 days she could not marry again. However, was this passage a reference to Queen

Helena, or to her daughter (Mary Magdalene)? Actually, it could have been either, for both women appear to have lost their husbands at this time. The circumstances of Helena's (Mary the Virgin's) husband's death will be discussed shortly, but for now we shall concentrate on Mary Magdalene's husband.

The Talmud has already declared that Mary-Miriame Magdalene was married to King Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus). However, a much closer look at Josephus' *Antiquities* reveals that our favourite historian said much the same thing. He relates the story of King Herod the Great wanting to marry a daughter of Simon ben Boethus (there is some confusion whether this lady is the daughter of Simon or the sister). Simon Boethus, remember, is the name

of Mary Magdalene's father, and if this was Herod the Great then the date for this betrothal would be something like 10 or 20 BC. But in order to marry this lady, Herod decided to depose the current high priest and make Simon ben Boethus high priest instead. The reasoning here is that Herod wanted to marry a lady of some standing, and the Boethusan's family position in society did not warrant a royal marriage, without Simon Boethus being promoted to high priest. However, this is nonsense, because the same text has already explained how Simon Boethus was rich, influential and a notable priest of Egypt, while his daughter (Mary) was the most beautiful and esteemed lady of that time.^{J61} Eventually, after falling foul of a court dispute, Simon was deposed from the priesthood and Matthias ben

Theophilus was promoted in his place.^{J62}

So Mary, the daughter of Simon Boethus, married Herod the Great. But if we fast-forward a few decades, we find that upon King Agrippa I being made tetrarch of Judaea in AD 41, he deposed the current high priest and installed one Simon ben Boethus; and Saul-Josephus makes it perfectly clear that this is the same Simon who has just been mentioned. But this cannot be so. The first Simon must have been born in about 60 BC to have been high priest under Herod the Great, which would make him about a hundred years old by this time. Besides, this Simon Boethus was eventually deposed and replaced by someone called Matthias, just as the previous high priest was. There is also, in both cases, the peculiar tale about a brother of this

Matthias, who is called either Jonathan or Joseph, becoming high priest for a single day, and surely this is not something that could have occurred more than once.^{J63} As readers can see, the circumstances are identical, and so this entire section of text must have been duplicated and placed in two different eras of *Antiquities*.

The solution to this muddle is that a scribe has identified the wrong Herod. He assumed that the king who Mary of Boethus married was Herod the Great; but it wasn't, she married Herod Agrippa I instead (a grandson of Herod the Great). But Herod Agrippa I died in AD 44, and so at this time Mary of Boethus (Mary Magdalene) would have become a widow.

High Priests under:

Herod the Great	Herod Agrippa	Combined and true list
Jesus ben Phabet	Theophilus ben Ananus	Theophilus ben Ananus
Simon Boethus	Simon Boethus	Simon Boethus
Matthias ben Theophilus	- Jonathan (one day)	- Joseph- Jonathan (1 day)
- Joseph (one day)	Matthias ben Theophilus	Matthias ben Theophilus
Elizar ben Boethus	Eloneus ben Boethus	Lazarus ben Boethus

As part of Agrippa I's reshuffle of his government, shortly after assuming the kingship in AD 37, he deposed High Priest Theophilus and replaced him with Simon-Boethus-Nicodemus, the father of Mary Magdalene. Note that

this Theophilus, who was deposed, may well have been the father of Johanan-Saul-Josephus. Thus there is a definite family rivalry here.

Agrippa then appointed Silas as his army commander, and Silas, you might remember, was the name of a companion of Saul-Josephus on many of his travels around the Mediterranean. These events happened in the early AD 40s, while the missionary tours were in the early AD 50s, so if this was the same Silas, he would have been an older member of the team. Agrippa also commanded that the Nazarene should cut their hair in celebration, for the Nazarene sacrificed their hair rather than animals. This is interesting, for this royal edict is given in the same context as the appointment of Simon-Boethus, and yet we already know that the

(Simon) Boethus-Nicodemus from the Talmud was also a Nazarene, and the Nazarene did not normally cut their hair. This is further confirmation that the characters from the Talmud and the characters from the gospels and Josephus' *Antiquities* are the same people.

Simon Boethus must have been a troublesome priest for Agrippa I, for he made a speech declaring Agrippa unholy and not a proper Jew, and that he should be excluded from the Temple. Enraged, Agrippa deposed Simon Boethus and appointed Matthias ben Theophilus instead.

There is one final comparison to be made here, and it is an interesting one at that. The Roman governor of Syria, Marcus, was concerned about a scheduled meeting between all the Syrian kings, including Agrippa I,

Antiochus of Emesa, Cotys of Armenia and Polemo of Pontus. It may have been this concern that prompted another change of high priest back to the family of Boethus, who may have been more reliable allies of Rome. The new incumbent was called Elioneus ben Boethus, [J64](#) which is an unusual name. However, if we look at the duplicate insertion of this same story into the time of Herod the Great, this same person becomes Eleazar ben Boethus instead.[J65](#) Now this is much more interesting, for this is a well known name in the New Testament, where he appears as Lazarus Λαζαρος, which is a Greek rendering of Eleazar אלעזר. The Lazarus in the Gospel of John was definitely connected with Mary and Martha of Bethany, and therefore connected to Simon Boethus too, and yet this High Priest Eleazar

(Lazarus) was similarly called 'ben Boethus'. Could this have been the same Lazarus that Jesus 'resurrected' (raised to the Third Degree) in John Chapter 11?

Strangely enough, the disparate strands of this story all begin to coalesce into a strong cord of real (biblical) history when we recall that the 'raising from the dead' of Lazarus by Jesus was performed at a house in Bethany.^{B66} This was the same house that Mary Magdalene and Martha lived in, and where Mary anointed Jesus with the costly oil of spikenard.^{B67} However, if you follow all the lost trails that still remain in the New Testament, the ones that the Catholic censors missed, we find that this house was also called the House of Simon. Now surely this must have been Simon Boethus, the father of Mary

(Magdalene)!

Note also that this same Simon-Boethus in *Antiquities* was also called Cantheras (now the village of Qanawat). Now Canthra was one of the Roman Decapolis cities of Syria, and it lay just north of Umm el-Jimal, the city I have identified as Gamala in modern Syria. Similarly, if one travels a little further north, we come to Palmyra, which was probably the primary city of this royal family. If Simon-Boethus-Nicodemus was the father of the biblical Mary and Martha of Bethany, as seems likely, then it would be convenient if they lived in the same location; and here we can see that they do, for I have similarly argued that the location called Bethany was actually Bethanya, the province to the east of the Jordan that included Gamala.

The comparisons are:

Talmud and Josephus

New Testament

Boethus-
Nicodemus
had two
daughters
called Mary
and Martha,
who
Professor
Eisenman
identifies
with the
biblical
Bethany
sisters.

The house at
Bethany accommo-
dated two sisters
called Mary and
Martha. It is certain
that this Mary was
Mary Magdalene.

Boethus-
Nicodemus
was also

The house at
Bethany belonged

called Simon. to Simon.

Mary (and Martha?) married Jesus of Gamala. Mary Magdalene married Jesus, at the Cana wedding.

Mary (Magdalene) was a Nazarene. Mary Magdalene was a Nazarene.

Mary (Magdalene) had a ritual defilement. Mary Magdalene had some kind of defilement.

A son of Simon Boethus was called Lazarus (Eleazar). Lazarus was 'raised from the dead' by Jesus at the house of Simon.

Mary, the daughter of Simon-Boethus, 'bought' Jesus' position as high priest.

It was Mary Magdalene who anointed Jesus (as king and high priest) in the house of Simon at Bethany. Hebrews Chapter 7 confirms that Jesus became high priest of Jerusalem.

This equivalence between the biblical Simon who owned the house at Bethany and Simon Boethus is interesting, for it surely means that Mary Magdalene was married, for a short while, to King Agrippa I. So the influential Boethusan family had married into the royal family of Syria, where Agrippa ruled at that time. This

would have been a logical strategic arrangement, for the Boethusian family were the Gamalians and their home territory was also in the eastern provinces of Syria. This would mean that both Simon (Boethus-Nicodemus) and Jesus (of Gamala) were now members of the Herodian royal family, and the Gospel of Matthew makes this perfectly clear when it says:

And when they had come to Capernaum, the tax-collectors came to Simon-Peter, and said, 'Does your teacher (Jesus) not pay tribute?' He said, 'Yes (he does)'. And when Simon-Peter was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, 'What do you think, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take taxes or tribute? Of their own children, or of strangers?' Simon-Peter said unto him, 'Of strangers'. Jesus said unto him, 'Then are the children free'.[B68](#)

Again this needs a little explanation. The tax-collectors want taxes (tribute)

from Jesus. But Jesus tricks Simon Peter into saying that the children of the royal family should not be taxed. Then Jesus comes out with his trump card – ‘therefore I should not be taxed too!’ But Jesus’ logic only works if he and Simon were of the current royal family, which was at that time Herodian. And they were of the royal family, through the short-lived marriage of Mary Magdalene and King Agrippa I, and so Jesus was right, he should not have needed to pay tax. Note, once more, that the perennial gripe of Jesus and his family was one of taxation, for they had been promised their lands tax-free.

This marriage gives us another interesting date for these biblical events, for this marriage (between Mary Magdalene and Agrippa I) would have to have been in AD 41, when

Simon Boethus is thought to have become high priest, but this is some eight years after Jesus is supposed to have died according to the orthodox chronology. It also gives us a probable date for Mary's birth, for if she was a late teenager by the time of this marriage, say eighteen years of age, then she would have been born around AD 23, while King Jesus was most probably born around AD 14 (according to Bishop Irenaeus). The marriage between King Jesus and Mary must have occurred after AD 44, when Agrippa died. If, for the sake of argument, this was AD 46, then the couple would have been 32 and 23 years old respectively, and these are ages that seem entirely reasonable.

Parthian sisters

This investigative diversion, into the links between the Boethusian family and the biblical family, has proved to be decidedly fertile. So what, then, can we discover if we delve deeper into the histories of Queen Helena and Queen Thea Muse – the two inordinately wealthy ladies who were both from Parthia and indulged in similar incestuous marriages. In the book *Cleopatra*, I maintain that the biblical King Jesus was descended from Queen Thea Muse Ourania; who was the exiled Parthian (Persian) queen of Egyptian ancestry who created the city state of Gamala in Aurania and Bethanya, to the east of Syrio-Jordan. This is why King Jesus was called Jesus of Gamala, although the term Gamala may also refer to Egypt and his Egyptian heritage. But who was the queen who seems to be

aping Thea Muse so assiduously: who was Queen Helena of Adiabene? Actually, we know very little about her and her people as she does not seem to have made much of a mark on the historical record, apart from a few lines in the Talmud and Saul-Josephus' *Antiquities*.

A good place to start this search, one might think, is by locating this queen's name in another historical text. However, as is usual on this tortuous theological journey, her name will not be found for it is not a name at all. In fact, the entire orthodox history of this queen is highly peculiar. She is said to have been the queen of Adiabene, a semi-autonomous province of Parthia that is said to lie around modern Mosul and Kirkuk, and that is where most classical maps place the province. However, there is no history of Helena

in this region and precious little evidence that a kingdom called Adiabene ever existed at all, which is rather odd.*⁴ Neither is there any explanation as to why the Parthian empire would have tolerated an independent Adiabene inside its own territories in the first place. So here we have a famous queen, and every modern theologian and historian will mouth the observed orthodox truisms that she came from 'Adiabene' in northern Iraq, when it would appear that this place and this queen do not even exist outside the pages of the Talmud and Josephus' *Antiquities*.

The resolution of these problems lies in the term Adiabene probably being an anachronism, for it may well be indicating that Helena came from Parthia originally, but this does not necessarily mean that she was living

there at this time. In a similar fashion, Helena's name will not be found in the historical record as this was not her real name. Helena Ελληνα simply means 'Greek woman', and indeed she was a Greek, as we shall see shortly; and so once more we find that the name of a famous person has been deliberately obscured. Well, what about her brother-husband then? Unfortunately, the name given for King Monobazus is also yet another of the many hypocorisms in this tortuous investigation. Monobazus comes from *mono* μονος and *bassileus* βασιλευς, meaning 'Only King' or perhaps 'Great King', and there were many kings who called themselves 'great'.

Now Monobazus had a son by Helena called Izates (and perhaps another son called Monobazus), and Queen Helena persuaded her husband

that only her son should succeed him. Monobazus' other wives were furious and plotted against Izates, and so he was sent away to a town called Charax-Spasini, which was also a part of Monobazus' kingdom. This town is said to be located at the mouth of the Euphrates on the Persian Gulf, and if this is so then the extent of Monobazus' kingdom is rather larger than at first thought.^{J69} In fact, it must have encompassed all of Parthia, which is why the term Adiabene must be an anachronism, for this royal family most certainly did not rule all of Parthia at this time. Note also that Charax-Spasini is in the lands of the Mandaeans, the Judaic sect that has the greatest affinity with the Nazarene, the sect which Jesus and Mary Magdalene belonged to.

Upon the death of Monobazus,

Queen Helena assembled all the lords and aristocrats of her lands, and asked them to endorse the king's wish that Izates should take the throne. The lords eventually agreed, and went even further by calling for the king's other son(s) to be held in detention (to prevent a dispute over the succession). They were eventually sent to Rome as hostages. Thus Izates was sat on the throne, a diadem placed on his head, a ring on his finger and a *sampser* in his hand.*⁵ There is a confusion of names here, as both Izates and Monobazus are made king, but since we already know that Monobazus is simply a title, meaning 'Great King', the confusion evaporates.^{J71}

However, readers of the book *Cleopatra* are perhaps beginning to see a few familiar events here. Here is a Greek queen of all Persia (Parthia)

who is married to the Great King in an incestuous relationship. She has managed to manipulate the aristocracy into excluding all the king's other sons from the succession bar her own, and have them sent to Rome as hostages. But all of this is exactly the same story as Josephus has already given us for Queen Thea Muse Ourania. She too was an Egypto-Greek princess who married the Great King of Parthia (Phraates IV) as a minor wife, but managed to manipulate her son (Phraataces) into becoming the king's heir, while all his elder sons were again held as hostages by the Romans. How many Persian (Parthian) hostage-princes did Rome have at this time?

Queen Thea Muse also indulged in an incestuous relationship, just as did Queen Helena, but this time with her son and not her brother. However,

since the husband and son of Queen Helena have the same name, there is room for a great deal of confusion here. The only real difference between these queens is the presumed date of these events. Thea Muse placed the king's other sons into the hands of Emperor Augustus, while Helena gave them to Emperor Claudius instead, which is probably a scribal error created by accidentally jumping a generation, as we shall see.

So was Queen Helena of Adiabene actually Queen Thea Muse Ourania? It does seem likely, and this kind of duplication of material has, after all, happened many times in the texts of Saul-Josephus. His great book entitled *Antiquities* was certainly not assembled by one man, as there are a variety of spellings and styles in the text that betray different scribal hands.

There are also a number of repeat observations and histories which nevertheless include different information and different names, all of which suggests that a number of scribes received information from different sources and included them in their growing text. Due to poor editing, proofreading and very little in the way of cross-referencing between scribes, these repeated sections were never spotted and removed, and so we get these equivalent stories within the same book.

Significantly, this second story about Queen Thea Muse and Phraates IV appears to be greatly reworked and from a completely different source, in that it deliberately distorts the royal names into 'The Greek Queen' (Helena) and 'The Great King' (Monobazus). This was a text that had

been so distorted from the original version, that not only did the proofreader not spot the duplication of material, but nobody else has either – for the last two millennia. But someone, somewhere must have known who these people really were, for they renamed Phraates IV ‘Monobazus’ meaning the ‘Great King’, which is exactly what Phraates was called in Parthia. More cryptically, they also renamed Thea Muse as ‘Helena’ meaning ‘Greek Woman’. So whoever coined this hypocorism knew that Thea Muse was half Greek, and that she was therefore the lost daughter of Queen Cleopatra of Egypt (who was also Greco-Egyptian), just as I have already argued.

But if these two stories are the same, and Helena is Thea Muse, then what other similarities can we find

between these ‘two’ royal couples from the east? Well, the story continues and it transpires that King Artabanus (II) of Parthia fled to Izates (Helena’s son) and asked for his assistance, and that Izates military forces successfully placed Artabanus back on the throne of Parthia. Now this just has to be the same history as was told earlier in *Antiquities*, where King Artabanus fled to the mountains of Media, a kingdom that traditionally included parts of what later became Adiabene. There he ‘gathered a great army together’ and retook the kingdom of Parthia. Clearly this is the same story, yet the first of these accounts is appended to the history of Queen Helena and Izates, while the second is appended to the history of Queen Thea Muse and Phraataces. In which case, it would seem more than likely that the

‘great army’ that Artabanus gathered together in the mountains of Media was actually the army of Queen Thea Muse Ourania which, as has been mentioned previously, contained a formidable cohort of 600 mounted archers. (Helena and Izates’ army is actually said here to consist of 6,000 horsemen, which is a simple exaggeration of the original 600 mentioned for Queen Thea Muse – a legion instead of a cohort.)^{J72}

The only real difference between these two accounts is that the usurper king of Parthia, who was fighting against Artabanus, is now called Cinnamus instead of Vonones, but the rest of the material is the same. This, together with all the other material we have looked at, means that there are two parallel and identical stories here. Thus, it would appear to be manifestly clear that Queen Helena

was simply a later nickname for Queen Thea Muse Ourania, and the account of this queen's life has been duplicated in *Antiquities*.

This new information seems to imply that when Queen Thea Muse was exiled from Parthia (Persia), instead of going straight to Gamala in Bethanya, she initially established a small kingdom in Adiabene. It was from there that assistance was given to King Artabanus II when he was temporarily deposed. But, as we have already seen, the evidence for a lavishly wealthy kingdom in the region around Mosul is totally lacking. Remember that Queen Helena was said to have been incredibly rich, and so her home kingdom would have had to have been equally rich to have supported such a royal family. However, there is no evidence for such a wealthy royal

family in this region.

Besides, Parthia was a strong nation: they had defeated Mark Antony in 36 BC; Augustus gave Phraates IV tribute to prevent further hostilities in about 20 BC; Herod (Archelous?) had given Thea Muse sanctuary in eastern Syria to protect his eastern borders against the Parthians in AD 4; while the Parthian king, Vologases I, was confident enough to invade Roman Armenia in AD 60. Why, in this case, did the Parthians, under kings Artabanus II and Vologases I, tolerate the independent kingdom of Adiabene within their lands? The answer is that they did not, for the Adiabene royal family were already exiled to other lands. This is why Saul-Josephus reports that the Parthian king, Vologases, told Izates of Adiabene that his kingdom of Parthia ran from the

Euphrates to Bactria. This empire encompasses all of traditional Adiabene, which is said to lie somewhere east of the Tigris, so it would seem unlikely that Monobazus' and Izates' lands were near the Tigris, inside the Parthian Empire. But if Adiabene was just a nostalgic anachronism, then where did Thea Muse and Helena actually live?

For an answer, we probably need look no further than Palmyra, a desert oasis city that lies between the Mediterranean and the Euphrates, which spectacularly rose to great wealth and power in the first and second centuries AD. This is an era for an escalation in riches that dovetails very nicely with the exile of Queen Thea Muse Ourania (Helena) in AD 4. This is also a city that could easily have been closely linked with Judaea,

Rome and Parthia, as the Adiabenes were said to have been, for it lay on the borders of all three nations. It is likely, therefore, that the main city founded by Thea Muse and her army of 600 mounted archers was not Gamala, but Palmyra. We shall look more closely at the history of Palmyra in the next chapter.

Further evidence for this link between Adiabene and Palmyra can be seen in the nomenclature of the Palmyrans. 'Adiabene' is a Greco-Parthian name for this kingdom, while the Jews referred to it as 'Yadiab' (a short form of Yadiab-ene). Conversely, many of the leading families in Palmyra have rather familiar names, and one of these was the Bene Yadi-bol, meaning the 'Sons of Yadi-bol'. But if this name does not sound familiar, then a little explanation is

required. The suffix of 'bol' is a god-name that refers to the Semitic Bel or Baal. If we delete the god-name from this family name, we derive Bene Yadi or perhaps Yadi Bene. This, as we shall see, may be the true meaning of Adiabene (Yadiab-ene). So queens Thea Muse and Helena were probably of the same family, and although this Greco-Egyptian royal family had once ruled Parthia (Adiabene), they were now in exile and resident in the rapidly growing city of Palmyra.

Izas and Jesus

In the book *Cleopatra*, the most contentious claim that I made about Queen Thea Muse was that the biblical King Jesus (Jesus of Gamala) was her direct descendant (her grandson, the son of Julia Ourania). Judas-Zamaris

of Gamala, the founder of the Galilean Sect, just has to have been related in some manner to Thea Musa, most probably her son, while King Jesus-Justus of Gamala was his son. The name 'Judas' simply referred to this person being a Jew, and it was being used in this manner because he was prominently identified as one of the exotic 'Babylonian Jews' who had arrived in Judaea from Parthia.

However, the 'Judaism' of the Essene and the Galileans was substantially more akin to ancient Egyptian theology than the Judaism we know today. This is demonstrably so, and we have already seen snippets of Galilean-Nazarene theology in Hippolytus' *Refutation of Heresies*. All of this doctrine was substantially Egyptian in character, with strong references to standard Osirian


mythology and the phallic creation myth of Atum – there was absolutely nothing in this sect that we would recognise as being typically Jewish in the modern sense at all.

It is uncertain what the orthodox Jerusalem Temple creed was at this time, but I have already demonstrated that the Judaism of kings David and Solomon used similar phallic and Pagan veneration rites, including sacred trees, Temple prostitutes and the phallic Maypole. Saul-Josephus mentions the ‘conversion’ of Queen Helena to Judaism, but there may have been no need at all for a ‘conversion’ of Helena, for she already had a strong Egypto-Judaic heritage that may have been similar to the doctrines still in use in the Jerusalem Temple. If anything, it would have been Helena who was ‘converting’ the Jews of

Jerusalem back to a more traditional form of Egypto-Judaism. In fact this is exactly what we see, with Saul-Josephus mentioning the formation of the Galilean and Essene sects of Jesus and James, which possessed a radical 'new' (traditional) form of Judaism that was heavily reliant on astrology, and they were aggressively proselytizing this new creed all over Syrio-Judaea.

However, if all of this is so, and the entire biblical family was really descended from Queen Helena and Queen Thea Muse, then a son of this royal family should have been called 'Jesus'. Could this be possible? Did a descendant of this family bear this name? Was the biblical King Jesus a direct descendant of this family? Strangely enough, when Saul-Josephus refers to Queen Helena's son, Izates,

he sometimes calls him '**Izas**'.⁷³ This name, I strongly suggest, was simply a corruption of the Greco-Hebrew name '**Jesus**' (Ιησους I Ιησους). Or perhaps the corruption is *vice versa*, and Izas is the original here.⁷⁴ Dr Lawrence Shiffman understands the root of the name 'Izas' to be Persian, meaning 'divine being' or 'god', and so perhaps the name 'Jesus' was a Greek derivation of that name; which is another reason why King Jesus became known as a 'divine being' or 'god' by those who are easily confused by such matters.

However, since the Arabic name for Jesus is Essa or Isa, it is much more likely that this name is actually a poor transliteration of Osiris, the Egyptian Asar (Essar) . The Greco-Egyptian chronicler, Manetho, said that Moses was called Osarseph

(Osiris Seph), the Son of Osiris. Undoubtedly, being of the 'Root of Jesse', a descendent of King David, Jesus would have liked to have inherited the same Egyptian title, and it would appear that he did just that. But the title has mutated down the years from the Egyptian Asar to the Parthian Izas, the Arabic Essa, the Greek Eesus and finally the Anglicised Jesus.

In addition, Izas, the son of Helena, was said to have been called the king's 'only begotten' son (*monogenes* μονογενης), despite the fact that Monobazus had many sons by many wives,



*Fig
11.7 Mary the
Virgin dressed
as a queen.*

including an elder
brother called
Monobazus II by

*Chartres
Cathedral.*

Helena. So Izas (Izates) was called Monogenes, while his brother was called Monobazus, but if we combine these two names we derive an 'Only Begotten Son and Only King', while King Jesus was equally known as the 'Only Begotten Son and Only King'.^{B75}

The evidence seems overwhelming – King Jesus was Prince Izas (Izates), the son of Queen Helena and King Monobazus, who became King Izas-Jesus of the Galilean and Nazarene Sects. This is why Jesus was said to be a king (christ) and why he was so influential in Judaeen politics. This is also the reason for the three Persian (Parthian) Magi attending his birth, for he was still a Persian royal, even if he was in exile. But what

an elevation in status. Jesus, the carpenter, now an exiled prince-king of Egypt and Parthia and, together with Mary Magdalene, the richest couple in the whole of Judaea.

This appears to be another *eureka* moment. In the book *Cleopatra*, I positively linked the biblical King Jesus to Queen Thea Muse Ourania, but could not convincingly explain their precise relationship, nor why the family had the Judaic names that are ascribed to them in the New Testament. However, we now have a modified scenario that seems to explain almost everything.

Queen Thea Muse and Queen Helena were both exiled from Parthia to Palmyra in Syria, which rapidly became an inordinately rich and independent tax-free city state. Thus, the province of Bethanya (Bethany) did

not just encompass Gamala in Jordan, as I maintained in the book *Cleopatra*, but also the city just to the north of Gamala called Palmyra. This royal family also built a vast palace in Jerusalem, which was known as the richest residence in the entire city. So the birth of King Jesus (and John the Baptist) may have been in Palmyra and not Gamala; with Jesus' birth being in AD 14, according to Bishop Irenaeus. And it has to be said that Palmyra would have been a fitting place to receive three priestly Magi from Parthia for the birth of these Egypto-Parthian princes; for Palmyra was the border-city between Rome and Parthia, the city of trade between East and West where the two cultures met and embraced each other.

But there is still a problem to be solved here, for this explanation gives

us another dislocation in dates. Although Queen Thea Muse, being born in 43 BC, could easily have visited Jerusalem in the early part of the first century AD, she would have been far too old to have had a son in AD 14 (or even AD 4 for that matter). Likewise, it is likely that Izas (the biblical Jesus) would have been too young to assist King Artabanus of Parthia in his military campaigns. Thus Queen Thea Muse could not have been Queen Helena herself.

However, the resolution to this minor difficulty is fairly simple. All that has happened is that we have simply slipped a generation here, a common event in this complex history of the region. It is likely, therefore, that the Queen Helena mentioned by Saul-Josephus and the Talmud was actually Julia Ourania, the daughter of Queen

Thea Muse. Thus, the true equivalences within this family are:

Biblical	Josephus-Talmud
??	Queen Thea Muse Ourania
??	King Phraates IV and Prince Phraataces (Monobazus I & II)
Mary the Virgin	Princess Julia Ourania (Queen Helena) Simon Boethus
Joseph	Nicodemus (Monobazus II & Ptolemy)
Mary Magdalene	Mary (Magdalene) of Boethus
Jesus	Prince Izas-Jesus of Gamala (Prince Monobazus III)

This generational dislocation is why we ended up with two separate accounts of these events in *Antiquities*. Thea Muse and Helena were actually two separate women, but since they

were mother and daughter their life-histories were always going to be similar. The only problem was that none of the scribes noticed this as they were transcribing this material into this great history of Judaea, and so we end up with two similar stories for two separate but closely related women. But if Mary the Virgin really was Julia Ourania, then who was she really married to? From the accounts in the Talmud and Saul-Josephus, we have already discovered that her husband was probably called Simon-Boethus-Nicodemus (the biblical Simon of Bethany), the father of Mary Magdalene. But what was Simon called in the historical record?

Actually, the most likely consort is Prince (King) Ptolemy of Mauretania, who was titled Pa-neter-ra (Pantera), which is exactly what the

Talmud calls Joseph, the father of Jesus. The inclusion of a king from North Africa into this illustrious Egypto-Persian royal family may seem a little odd, but Ptolemy was actually the grandson of Queen Cleopatra of Egypt, and therefore the cousin of Julia Ourania. See the genealogy in 11.1 for details. Felix, the Roman governor of Judaea mentioned in the New Testament, also had a wife from this same Mauretanian royal family.

Evidence for this Ptolemy (Simon Boethus) in Judaea at this time is thin on the ground, but I think a lingering trace of his name can be glimpsed in the account Saul-Josephus gives of his men plundering the wife of Ptolemy's baggage train:

Some adventurous young men ... lay in wait for the wife of Ptolemy, the king's governor. She was travelling in great state, protected by

an escort of cavalry, from the king's lands to the Roman lands, when they fell upon her cavalcade and plundered her baggage.^{J76}

This was the loot that Saul-Josephus was accused of stealing in the last chapter, which he eventually (under great pressure from Jesus) said he would return to the king, or perhaps use to fortify the town of Tarichaeae. But who was this wife of Ptolemy who lost this money?

Well, given the fact that King Jesus of Gamala was a king's governor (of Tiberias) and that it was King Jesus who got so upset at the theft of this money and hauled Saul-Josephus before a court in Tarichaeae to answer these charges, it would seem entirely possible that this unfortunate lady was Jesus' own mother, Julia-Helena (Mary the Virgin), the probable wife of Ptolemy. The great wealth that this lady

was carrying and the escort of cavalry again sounds very similar to the great wealth and mounted archers of this illustrious family. Simon Boethus may have been a second husband of Mary, after Ptolemy (Pa-neter-ra) was executed in AD 40 by Emperor Caligula.

This family relationship would be a good reason for Jesus being so enraged, and immediately convening a court in the hippodrome to question Saul-Josephus – for the lady who had been robbed was his mother, and the money may even have been intended to purchase his promotion to high priest! Just as important, perhaps, would be the possibility that Mary was Saul-Josephus' aunt, and it was this despicable act of theft from his own family that earned Saul-Josephus the nickname 'Gehazi', as we shall see in

the following paragraphs. Gehazi was the servant of the Old Testament Elisha and also a thief and a liar (2 Kings 5:20-25), so it was a fitting hypocorism for the lying and untrustworthy Saul-Josephus.

Agabus the locust

Another problem to cover is the origin of the biblical names that we are all so familiar with. I tackled this problem in the book *Cleopatra*, but these new links that have been discovered with Palmyra allow us to discover the origins of yet more biblical names.

Persia (Parthia) was substantially Greek speaking at this time, as was Egypt, and so the Egypto-Parthian exiles who settled in Palmyra would have spoken Greek, and this is what we find on the ground in Palmyra.

The majority of inscriptions are either in Greek or Aramaic. However, I have no doubt that this version of Greek came with a thick Egypto-Parthian accent, which resulted in the name 'Bazus' or 'Baseus' for *bassileus* (meaning 'king'), while the name 'Izas' became 'Jesus'.

It is not simply the name for King Jesus that can be found through these new Palmyran associations, but his brothers too. The Talmud mentions someone called Jacob of Hayadab, who was a rabbi deliberating mundane points of law in the Temple of Jerusalem (which is what the bulk of the Talmud is). So who was this Jacob? Well, we know that the name 'Jacob' is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek 'James'; and likewise, the province of Hayadab is another name for Adiabene. So here we have a rabbi

from Adiabene called James, who is working within the circle of esteemed priests in the Temple of Jerusalem. This just has to be a reference to James, the brother of Jesus (Izas).^{T77} So both Jesus (Izas) and James were from Adiabene (Palmyra) and thus related to Queen Helena (Julia Ourania).

Likewise, we have already seen that two of Helena's descendants, Kenedeus and Monobazus, were fighting in the ruins of Jerusalem against the Romans in AD 70. The translation for the name of the latter we have already covered, it meaning 'Great King', while 'Kenedeus' was derived from *kenos* κενοϛ *deos* δεοϛ meaning 'Dread of Vanity'. So these (brothers?) were known as the 'Great King' and 'Dread of Vanity', and perhaps there is no better description

of the differences between King Jesus and James. It was James who was the vegetarian, who came like John the Baptist 'neither eating nor drinking', while it was Jesus who was the glutton who 'ate and drank with tax-collectors and sinners'. Remember that these jibes were most probably not generalisations about eating habits, but specific concerns about the two brothers' ritual purity: whether they maintained a strict *kosher* diet. Quite obviously, Jesus was rather more relaxed about all this and was partial to the odd bacon sandwich.

But dietary prohibitions and mundane points of law were the stockin-trade for the priesthood in general and the Talmud in particular. A good example of the tedious nature of the Talmud is the commendation given to Queen Helena (Mary the Virgin) and

King Monobazus II (Simon Boethus),
for observing the laws so
punctiliously:

Come and hear: And the people of the house
of Monobazus did three things, and on
account of these they were honourably
mentioned: They performed sex in the
daytime, they examined their beds with cotton,
and they observed the rules of uncleanness
and cleanness in the case of snow.^{T78}

Here is a system of religious law that
regulates your sexual urges, the
inspection of beds (red cotton is not
allowed)*⁶ and the correct use of
snow! I'm surprised that Queen Helena
did not put her money to more useful
purposes, rather than propping up this
antiquated cult of navel-gazing nerds.
Or perhaps the Galilean Sect was that
more rational and practical religion,
and that is why she was promoting it.

The final link in this complex

story involves yet another new nickname, this time for Monobazus. My apologies for the scribes being so tedious with all this dutiful obfuscation, but they really did not want you to know who these people were.

It would appear that the New Testament calls King Monobazus by the name of Agabus (Acts 11:28), while Eusebius calls him Agbarus, who was known as 'the Great King beyond the Euphrates'. Remember that the title 'Great King' translates, in this heavily accented Persio-Greek of the Adiabene family, into 'Mono-Bazus'. In addition, this Agabus (Agbarus) prophesied the great famine in Jerusalem, the very same famine that Queen Helena (Julia-Mary) gave large amounts of money to relieve. Thus it is most certain that Agbarus was indeed

King Monobazus, the husband of Queen Helena of Adiabene (Julia-Mary), just as Professor Robert Eisenman also claims.⁷⁹

However, the fact that this King Agabus was indeed King Monobazus is plainly given to us in the Talmud. In its own uniquely cryptic manner the Talmud says the following (and again it is Johanan ben Zakkai or Saul-Josephus who delivers this lesson):

Rabbi Johanan (ben Zakkai) said: The destruction of Jerusalem came through a Kamza and a Bar Kamza. A certain man had a friend Kamza and an enemy Bar Kamza. He once made a party and said to his servant, Go and bring Kamza. The man went and brought Bar Kamza. When the man (who gave the party) found him there he said, See, you tell tales about me; what are you doing here? Get out.^{T82}

It is no wonder that so much of the Talmud is deemed to be unintelligible,

for what on Earth is this all about? Well, this paragraph may look confusing, and nothing to do with the research in hand, but it actually contains a wealth of information. Saul-Josephus-Johanan was nothing if not ultimately devious and superbly eloquent. So, let's start the decoding process.

Kamza is an anagram of *kazam* קזם meaning 'locust', and the Talmudic notes make this translation and meaning perfectly clear. Thus the verse says that the destruction of Jerusalem was caused by a locust (who was a friend of Johanan) and the son of a locust (who was an enemy of Johanan). Again, one might suspect that Johanan-Saul-Josephus has taken leave of his senses, so are we any closer to solving this riddle?

The answer lies, as always, in a

change of language.*⁷ If we look at the word 'locust' in the Greek (instead of the Hebrew) we derive *agabus* ἀγαβος, the name of the very same king who I have already identified with Monobazus of Adiabene. King Agabus means King Locust, and so the cryptic references to a 'Kamza' and a 'bar Kamza' (a locust and a son of a locust) are actually references to King Agabus (Monobazus II) and his son Izas (Jesus). So the paragraph should actually read:

Rabbi Johanan said: The destruction of Jerusalem came through King Agabus-Monobazus and his son Izas-Jesus. A certain man (Johanan-Saul-Josephus) had a friend called King Agabus-Monobazus and an enemy called Izas-Jesus. He once made a party and said to his servant, Go and bring King Agabus-Monobazus. The man went and brought Izas-Jesus. When the man who gave the party found him there he said, 'See, you tell tales about me; what are you doing here?

Thus, according to Johanan-Saul-Josephus, the destruction of Jerusalem came about due to King Agabus-Monobazus, who Saul-Josephus liked, and his son Izas-Jesus, who Saul-Josephus most definitely did not like. But this statement is absolutely true in every respect. Saul-Josephus did indeed blame the entire destruction of Jerusalem upon the Galilean Sect of King Jesus-Izas and his father. It is also true that the venerable Gamaliel-Simon-Boethus (Agabus) was much more moderate than his son, and Saul-Josephus was more friendly with him. The 'party' referred to in this passage was obviously one of the meetings or court cases between King Jesus of Gamala and Saul-Josephus, that were held in Tiberias or Tarichaeae, and yes, they often did end in arguments

and sometimes violence. Note, however, that this translation only works if Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai was Saul-Josephus, for it was he who blamed Jesus and the Galileans for the destruction of Jerusalem in exactly this same fashion.

The stable and the Temple

The amazing revelation emerging in this chapter is that Mary Magdalene of Bethany was the Talmud's Mary of Simon-Boethus; that she was the richest woman in Judaea; that she married King Jesus of Gamala; and that she purchased the high priesthood for her husband. Now this might all seem a little incredible, especially bearing in mind the usual story that we are told about these characters, and some readers may still think the entire

argument is not possible nor credible.

However, the evidence does not end there, for the Talmud is quite adamant about this elevated status for the biblical family. The fact that Simon Boethus and the rest of these characters are connected to the biblical narrative is doubly confirmed in this paragraph from the Talmud, which says of Simon Boethus:

What was the incident with Rabbi Jesus ben Perahiah? — When King Jannaeus put the rabbis to death, Simeon ben Shetah was hid by his sister, whilst Rabbi Jesus ben Perahiah fled to Alexandria in Egypt. When there was peace, Simeon ben Shetah sent (for him) ... [Rabbi Jesus] arose and came back and found himself in a certain inn where they paid him great respect. He said: ‘How beautiful is this lady innkeeper! One of Jesus’ disciples (Gehazi) said to him, ‘My master, her eyes are narrow!’ He replied to him, ‘Wicked person! Is it with such thoughts that you occupy yourself!’ He sent forth four hundred horns and excommunicated him. [T84](#)

It may not seem like it, but this quote actually contains some familiar biblical elements; like a king killing all the priests (the infants), King Jesus' flight to Egypt; and Jesus' visit to an inn. This paragraph therefore includes all the elements for the complete nativity event for Jesus, as recorded in the gospels of Matthew and Luke.^{B85} But the era in which this 'nativity' has been set appears to have radically changed, so what is the meaning here? Well, the Talmud is deliberately designed to be confusing, so a little elucidation may help.

- i. The Talmud and the gospels often use the term 'children' for the priests or the disciples, as in Mark 7:27 where the 'children' are actually the disciples themselves, as we have seen

previously. In this paragraph the king is putting the rabbis or the disciples (the children) to death, and this makes this sentence appear to be a parody on Herod the Great slaying the innocent children during the nativity, as in Matthew 2:16.

- ii. King Jannaeus, as we have already seen, is a reference to King Agrippa II, rather than Herod the Great, which fast-forwards this paragraph into the second half of the first century AD. *8 The precise era of these events are difficult to determine, and the mention of King Agrippa killing rabbis does not help that much either, as

many were killed over the years. My best guess is that this had something to do with the death of James Justus, the brother of Jesus, which would date these events to AD 62 or 66. The earlier of these dates equates well with the date of Jesus of Gamala becoming high priest, as we shall see in note viii.

- iii. Rabbi Jesus ben Perahiah is a reference to the biblical King Jesus. (The Talmud's notes positively confirm this identification, labelling him as Jesus the Nazarene. The biblical-style references to the inn and Jesus' flight to Egypt also confirm this

identification.)

- iv. Jesus' father is named as Perahiah; yet another strange hypocorism to decipher. This nickname comes from *purah* פֹּאֵרָה meaning 'shoot' or 'branch'. Jesus was closely identified with the root or branch of the vine (a Shoot out of the stock of Jesse), for this was a reference to the royal family – a branch that runs through the generations with bunches of grapes representing individual royals (Romans 15:12). This is where we get the concept of the family tree from. However, as we have just seen, the Babylonian Jew with a private army called Judas-

Zamaris was also named after a 'branch' or 'shoot'. Thus the name Perahiah is exactly the same as Zamaris. Such witty and deliberate obfuscation.

- v. Note that Simon (obviously Simon Boethus, Mary Magdalene's father) is now surnamed Shetah. This hypocorism was coined from the sacred Shetiya stone of Judaism, a subject that we shall encounter in the final chapters.
- vi. Note also that the biblical incident at the inn is being played out before a King Jesus who was certainly not an infant. These events probably occurred in the AD

60s, and Jesus would have been more like 50 years old at this time, and so the lady innkeeper just has to be a reference to Mary Magdalene. At this inn, Jesus^{*9} excommunicates a disciple who questioned Mary Magdalene's beauty, and so the Temple's horns of excommunication were sounded.

- vii. The sentence about the innkeeper is unlikely to refer to a real inn, and I rather suspect that 'inn' should be interpreted as 'Jerusalem Temple'. This would certainly make more sense of the 'great respect' that Jesus received there (at the Temple), and this is

precisely the kind of witticism that the scribes loved to indulge in; especially if Jesus was using a ‘bread and wine’ style of communion, which some rabbis may have viewed as turning the Temple into a bar, pub or inn. These events would also be hugely noteworthy for the scribbling rabbis, for the keeper of the inn (the high priest of the Temple) was none other than Mary Magdalene – a woman. No wonder the rabbis wanted to cover this up. A woman high priest? Heaven forbid! We shall see why this is a distinct possibility later in this chapter.

viii. The term for ‘lady innkeeper’, *akhsania*, is probably another witty homophone, but I was unable to locate a positive translation. The word does resonate with *akh-asar-sheni* אַח עֶשֶׂר שְׁנֵי meaning ‘twelve brothers’, which would be a covert reference to Mary being a disciple of King Jesus and therefore a (high) priest of the Temple in his absence. Jesus (ben Gamala) actually became high priest in AD 64, and so he would have been in exile in Alexandria for just two years.

ix. The disciple who was excommunicated by King

Jesus was called Gehazi, and the Talmudic notes say that Gehazi was actually Saul (Josephus). I would concur with that identification, and for the following reasons. The strange comment that Mary's 'eyes are too narrow' may be an oblique sleight on her parentage, for 'narrow eyes' is a possible translation for the name 'Gehazi' גֵּחָזִי; thus Gehazi (Saul-Josephus) would be saying that Mary was a bastard child of his side of the family. Another passage says that Gehazi was excommunicated for calling Jesus by his personal name (instead of a formal title like 'master'). Yet

another says that he may have grabbed Mary's breasts.

The nickname 'Gehazi' was taken from the Old Testament. Gehazi was the servant of Elisha, the prophet from the Talmud that Jesus was often mistaken for. Elisha refused money from a rich man, but Gehazi ran after the man and accepted the money from him, and then denied it (2 Kings 5:20-25). In other words, Gehazi was a liar and a thief, the very charges that were laid at the door of Saul-Josephus. So here we have a disciple of Jesus who was both excommunicated and accused of theft and dishonesty, and

Saul-Josephus was accused likewise. He was certainly excommunicated at various points in the gospel saga, and in Josephus' *Life* (and in the Gospel of Luke) he was directly accused of stealing from the caravan of Ptolemy, King Agrippa II's governor.

This paragraph from the Talmud looks as though it is a parody of the biblical nativity, but rather than being based upon the nativity it may actually be the origin for this story. As we have already seen, many of King Jesus' disciples were actually in the high priesthood of the Temple of Jerusalem and so this biblical nativity story may originally have been implying that the king (Herod Agrippa II) was accused of 'putting the rabbis and disciples to death', not the 'children'. This may be

a reference to the death of James, which occurred in the early AD 60s. This Talmudic reference was then misinterpreted by the author of the Gospel of Matthew as a bizarre event where King Herod the Great was accused of killing innocent children, and so he has been branded as a tyrant ever since. This, however, was probably a deliberate lie by the gospel author, to cover up the true nature of these events.

In addition, the town of Bethlehem has also been misinterpreted in Matthew's gospel, for in the Greek this 'town' simply means Bethleem Βηθλεεμ, or the 'House of Bread'. But 'bread', as we have already seen, simply means *sophia* σοφία which refers to 'wisdom' or 'knowledge', and so the 'town' of Bethlehem actually means 'House of

Wisdom'. If we then assume that the gospels are using the same lavish facade of puns and euphemisms as the Talmud perennially does, then this 'House of Wisdom' is quite obviously another reference to the Temple of Jerusalem. Since, in the Talmud's version of these events, 'King Herod Agrippa' was accused of 'putting the rabbis to death', it is not unreasonable that these rabbis were located in the Temple. This would tend to confirm the translation of the inn as likewise being the Temple. In other words, the verse from the Gospel of Matthew should actually read as:

Then Herod Agrippa ... slew James the high priest who was in the Temple of Jerusalem. [B86](#)

While the paragraph from the Talmud should read:

What was the incident with Rabbi Jesus-Izas? — When King Agrippa put Rabbi James to death, Simeon Boethus was hid by his sister, whilst Rabbi Jesus-Izas fled to Alexandria in Egypt. When there was peace, Simeon Boethus sent for him ... Rabbi Jesus arose and came back and found himself in the Temple of Jerusalem where they paid him great respect. He said: 'How beautiful is this lady high priest (Mary)!

Why King Agrippa II was implicated in the death of James I do not know, because King Jesus and King Agrippa II were usually allies, but it does seem that on this occasion Herod Agrippa took the blame for this death (in which Saul-Josephus was also implicated) and the fallout from this murder was sufficient for Simon Boethus to go into hiding and for Jesus to go into temporary exile in Alexandria.

Gehazi and Caesar

That this thieving disciple, Gehazi, was actually Saul-Josephus is confirmed by a few Talmudic conundrums, the latter two being delightfully cunning and devious in the extreme. In the first of these, the Talmud says of Gehazi:

Still others say: Gehazi drove the Rabbis from before him. As it is written: 'And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell before thee is too straight for us, but up to then it had not been too straight.'^{T87}

Now this is a simple quotation from the Old Testament that is being used as a simple allusion to confirm that Gehazi really is Saul (Josephus). All readers need to recall is that Acts 9:11 says that Saul-Josephus was staying with Judas on Straight Street in Damascus, a covered bazaar that still exists today. This extract therefore

positively links Gehazi and Saul-Josephus.

In comparison, the second conundrum is far more devious and convoluted, and deliberately so. The Talmud says of Elisha (Jesus) and Gehazi (Saul-Josephus).

Our rabbis taught: Elisha (Jesus) was afflicted with three illnesses: one because he stirred up the bears against the children, one because he thrust Gehazi away with both his hands, and one of which he died. As it is said: Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died.[T88](#)

What a tangled web this one is, and it is most certainly worthy of Saul-Josephus' silver tongue. But it is most certainly worth exploring further, for this one sentence encapsulates the entire struggle of the Jewish War and places Jesus at its very epicenter! So, in explanation:

a. The first illness that King Jesus contracted was caused by his stirring up the bears (the Romans) against the children (the rabbis or perhaps the Jewish people in general - the Children of Israel). This is an important observation, which is entirely correct according to my new analysis, for it places the biblical Jesus at the very epicenter of the Jewish War and the destruction of Jerusalem.

b. The second illness that King Jesus contracted was caused by his thrusting Gehazi (Saul-Josephus) away with both hands. In Jewish custom this double-handed rejection was a severe rebuke and it signalled Saul-Josephus' excommunication from the Galilean Sect. In other

words, Jesus' second illness was caused by making Saul-Josephus an enemy. Since it was Saul-Josephus who then 'led' the Roman army on the offensive against the Galilean rebels, this assertion is also absolutely correct.

c. The third illness is very cryptic indeed. The third illness is that King Jesus had fallen sick (sickness a.) of his sickness (sickness b.), and this had caused his downfall or death (the third sickness). In other words, Jesus' rejection of Saul-Josephus (sickness b.) had led to the Romans destroying Jerusalem (sickness a.) and thus to his own downfall and crucifixion (death).

Note, however, that this witty conundrum is not only perfectly correct in all respects, but that it only works if Saul was Josephus. The Talmud's later copyists have understood that Gehazi is a pseudonym for Saul, and noted that in the margins, but Saul has only now been implicated in the destruction of Jerusalem through my radical assertion that Saul was Josephus. If Saul was not Josephus, then the Talmud's witty conundrum makes no sense whatsoever: for Saul has no life or history within any tradition beyond AD 65, because he was supposed to have died in Rome at this time (although there is no evidence for this). So Saul, as the Church portrays him, could not have been implicated in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Talmud's conundrum would make no sense.

But Saul can be implicated if he

was Josephus, for Josephus was not only alive in this era, he was also intimately involved in the destruction of Jerusalem. Only now does the conundrum make sense, and once more we conclusively see that Saul (St Paul) must be Josephus Flavius. Q.E.D.

Similarly, this conundrum only works if King Jesus was alive in AD 70. Jesus is being accused of stirring up the Romans against the Jews, and yet this event has to be rather serious to have been of such importance to the Talmud. The greatest event where the Romans marched against the Jews was the Jewish War of AD 67 - 70, which was a primary topic of the Talmud. Thus this conundrum has to be referring to the siege of Jerusalem, and therefore Jesus must have been alive in AD 70. Q.E.D.

The Talmud appears to be full of

these oblique references to King Jesus (of Gamala) and his involvement in the Jewish War. Here is another one, that quite explicitly sets out the political goals of Jesus and the Galilean Sect:

Had the men of Jericho escorted Elisha he would not have stirred up bears against the children, as it is said: And he went up from Jericho unto Bethel; and as he was going up there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, 'Go up, you bald head, go up you bald head.' ^{T89}

Now this is a peculiar verse that makes one wonder if Johanan had been over indulging on Jesus' communion wine. However, in actual fact this is simply a quote from the Tanakh (2 Kings 2:23) which has been deliberately selected and artificially placed into the life of Jesus (Elisha), which is a standard technique the Talmud always uses to illustrate a point. But upon first reading

it makes little or no sense, so what was the point of placing it in the Talmud? Once more we need to understand the Talmudic code and the new chronology, and then everything becomes clear.

Elisha (Jesus) goes out of Jericho and the 'children' he meets shout at him 'go up bald head' עלה קרה. Now this may all sound a little silly, but remember that it is Johanan ben Zakkai (Saul-Josephus) who is relating this story, and he must have possessed the most silvered tongue in the history of mankind. Again he is swapping languages here, for he is looking towards the Latin for 'hair', which was caesaries. In addition, it would not have escaped Saul-Josephus' attention that the most famous owner of the 'bald head' sobriquet in this era was actually Julius Caesar, who was

rather embarrassed about his receding hairline. In addition, the term *alah* עלה being used for 'go up' can also mean 'arise'.

Thus Saul-Josephus has managed to trawl through the entire Old Testament and discover a verse where the children (the disciples or priests) can be interpreted as saying 'Arise Caesar'. Thus, what Johanan-Saul-Josephus was intending us to read and understand was:

Had the men of Jericho escorted Jesus he would not have stirred up Romans against the Children of Israel, as it is said: And he went up from Jericho unto Bethel; and as he was going up there came forth the disciples and priests out of the city, and they said unto him, 'Arise Caesar, Arise Caesar'.^{T92}

Brilliant, isn't it, if you understand the Talmudic code. So once again we see that it was King Jesus who stirred up

the Romans against the Jews in the late AD 60s, and he did so because his disciples and priests had hailed him as Caesar, the new Emperor of Rome. Had they not done so, then Jesus would never have had the confidence or popular support to challenge the authority of Rome.

Note also that these quotes were originally about the prophet Elisha (Elias, Elijah). This is why the gospels claimed that Jesus *was* Elias (Elisha) in Matthew 17:12 and Mark 9:13, 15:34. The gospels were written retrospectively and the authors knew that Jesus had aspired to be the Emperor of Rome; as did, of course, the author of the Talmud.

This once again sets out the true goals of the Galilean Sect, which was to place their most respected prince and leader upon the throne of Rome.

This was to be achieved by fomenting a revolt in Judaea and allowing that revolt to roll across the entire Empire on the back of the Star Prophecy; and the only thing that stood between Jesus and complete victory was Johanan-Saul-Josephus and a few Roman legions. Unfortunately for King Jesus, Saul-Josephus was the victor in this battle of princely wills.

High Priest Magdalene

I mentioned earlier that the traditions of the Judaeian high priesthood gave us the possibility that King Jesus was married to both Mary and Martha. In fact, this is not simply a possibility, but a requirement for the priesthood. The Talmudic rule in question says that:

The high priest must be married; (but) to

guard against contingencies it was proposed to hold a second wife in readiness immediately before the Day of Atonement. [T93](#)

In contrast to Catholic doctrine and propaganda, King Jesus, who it now seems certain was High Priest of Jerusalem in AD 64, must have been married to even be proposed for the high priesthood. This was not an individual choice or preference, it was the law – King Jesus needed a wife. However, the legal reference in Talmud Yoma suggests that Jesus is likely to have had two wives rather than one, so that he had a ‘second wife in readiness, as a contingency’. The other daughter of Simon-Boethus is the most likely candidate for this second betrothal, and so Jesus was probably married to both Mary Magdalene of Bethany and her sister Martha. This is

why we have these same two sisters fussing over Jesus in the Gospel of John's Lazarus scene in Bethany, and why the Talmud is so confused about whether Jesus of Gamala was married to Mary or Martha. In fact, they were both wives of his and so Jesus had married both of his sisters.



Fig 11.8 Jesus' most trusted disciple is Mary Magdalene. An altar scene of the Last Supper from Drogheda Cathedral, Ireland.

However, although Mary and Martha were inordinately wealthy and

influential, as we have seen, and their husband (singular) had previously been high priest, the authors of the Talmud did not exactly like Mary. So what was the reason for this priestly animosity? One reason might be her membership of the Nazarene sect, which was quite different from mainstream Judaism. Another more extraordinary possibility is that Mary became high priest herself. We have already looked at verses from the Nag Hammadi gospels, which indicate that Mary had a high status within the disciples, and was probably King Jesus' second in command (as well as his sister-wife). Peter, especially, is jealous of this close relationship and says:

The disciples said to (Jesus), 'Why do you love her more than all of us'. The saviour answered, 'Why do I not love you like her?'⁹⁴

Likewise, Hippolytus says of the Nazarene creed and its origins:

These are the summaries of the numerous discourses which the Nazarene assert James the brother of the Lord handed down to Mariamme (Mary Magdalene).⁹⁵

Here it would seem as though Mary Magdalene received these secret initiations from James before any of the other disciples. Even if that was not entirely the case, she must still have been a high initiate, a disciple at the very least. This elevated rank is confirmed by the well-known controversy of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper, which clearly shows a female disciple at King Jesus' right side. This portrayal has been disputed by Catholic theologians, who claim that this person is simply a young man. However there are many such

illustrations of Jesus' favourite disciple being female in English stately homes, if one looks closely for them, but even I was surprised to see a woman at the side of Jesus in a Catholic cathedral in Ireland (see [fig 11.8](#)). So there is a distinct probability that Mary Magdalene was a disciple of Jesus; but what if she was more than that? What if Jesus, as High Priest of Jerusalem, had elevated Mary to the high priesthood?

Although this might seem unlikely, it is just the sort of act that would bring the condemnation of the entire priesthood upon Jesus and his fellow followers of the Galileans, for women were not even allowed into the inner courts of the Temple, let alone officiate in the Holy of Holies. So what evidence is there for this absurd suggestion? Well, the rules and

regulations for an applicant to the high priesthood in the first century included:

- i. He rent his garments, not from above, but from below, near the feet, the penalty for rending them from above being flagellation.
- ii. He could not permit his hair to be dishevelled, nor could he cut it.
- iii. He must have one house attached to the Temple and another in the city of Jerusalem.
- iv. His honour required that he should spend most of his time in the Sanctuary.
- v. The high priest must be

married. But to guard against contingencies it was proposed to hold a second wife in readiness immediately before the Day of Atonement.⁹⁶

Strange as it may seem, Mary of Boethus (Mary Magdalene) did most of this:

- i. Mary of Boethus probably rent her garments from below in the same manner. The Talmud says that carpets were laid so that her feet would not be exposed, but they were exposed. The Queen of Sheba is said to have done something quite similar, for her feet were similarly exposed to King Solomon. Was this exposure

of the feet the same as the rending of the high priest's garments from the bottom?

- ii. Mary's hair was wrapped around her, and she was known in the Talmud as the 'Dresser of Ladies Hair'.
- iii. Mary had a palace attached to Temple (with a carpet between the two).
- iv. Mary was punished for leaving the city.
- v. Mary was getting married to Jesus of Gamala. But another folio relates the tale of the lady who married a carpenter, but then ended up with two husbands (two wicks in one lamp).^{T97}

This evidence is by no means overwhelming, but it would not have been out of character for King Jesus to have introduced his wife Mary into the high priesthood, a strategy that would have been fought tooth and nail by the orthodox priesthood.

Sad demise of Mary

The bigger they come, the harder they fall is a common truism of life; and King Jesus and Queen Mary Magdalene were rolling the dice for high stakes here, for there was never going to be any compromise with the Roman military. This was Rome or bust, and unfortunately for this Egypto-Judaeon royal couple the dice did not come up sixes.

Having been the wealthiest couple in the whole of Judaeo-Syria,

the family lost the war with Rome and fell on hard times. King Jesus (Izas) and his brothers had been shipped off as captives of Rome, which left the women and children to fend for themselves. No doubt all the available family funds had been plundered, and so the women had very little to live on. Johanan-Saul-Josephus captures this imagery perfectly, when he says of Mary Magdalene of Boethus:

She had taken off her shoes, but she said, I will go out and see if I can find anything to eat. Some dung stuck to her foot and she died. [T98](#)

Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai left Jerusalem riding upon an ass, while his disciples followed him, and he saw a girl picking barley grains among the dung of Arab cattle. As soon as she saw him she wrapped herself with her hair and stood before him. 'Master,' she said to him, 'feed me.' 'My daughter,' he asked her, 'who are you?' She replied, 'I am (Mary) the daughter of Boethus-Nikodimus.' 'My

daughter,' he said to her, 'what has become of the wealth of your father's house?'^{T99}

This, is every antagonist's dream, their wealthy opponent laid so low that they have to pick grains from among the dung of cattle and beg food from their former enemy. How Johanan-Saul-Josephus must have savoured this moment; pretending that he could not even recognise Mary (his cousin), so destitute had she become. Perhaps, to even rub a little more salt into her wounds, he describes himself as going out of the city riding on a donkey, in an obvious but contrary imitation of Jesus' triumphant journey into the city on a donkey. The Talmud then says that Mary died, but not before she:

Brought out all her gold and silver and threw it in the street, saying, What is the good of this to me; thus giving effect to the verse, 'They shall cast their silver in the streets.'^{T101}

This, then, is the much more believable historical account of the rise and fall of the family of King Jesus. A royal dynasty who attained the height of power in Egypt and Parthia, before being exiled to the eastern fringes of Syrio-Judaea, but a royal family who nevertheless retained much of their wealth and power in this region. But here, after yet another fall from power after the siege of Jerusalem, the entire family was laid low – being either in prison, exile or reduced to penury.

But this historical truth must have been obvious to anyone who had studied the Talmud in detail, and yet not a word of this has been mentioned over the last two millennia; the conspiracy of silence was total. Only now is the lid of secrecy being lifted, and yet this particular Pandora's box still holds some surprises for us. But

for those who still cling to the teachings of orthodox Christianity, hope is not one of them.

summary

here is a great deal of evidence to show that Justus of Tiberias was Jesus of Gamala, and thus also the biblical Jesus.

Justus of Tiberias (Jesus) wrote a history of the Jews and the Jewish War that Saul-Josephus disliked. This would be an interesting text to discover.

The Talmud says that Mary (Magdalene) was the richest woman in Jerusalem, and that she bought the high priesthood for Jesus of Gamala (the biblical Jesus).

The Talmud says that the father of Mary

(Magdalene) was Nicodemus, the rich man in the gospels. It also says that Mary was married to Jesus.

Queen Helena of Adiabene and her husband King Monobazus were inordinately rich, and have a great deal in common with the biblical family.

Queen Helena was a Nazarene, as were Mary Magdalene and Jesus. Monobazus' philosophy comes direct from the New Testament (or *vice versa*).

Queen Helena and Monobazus (of Parthia) also display many similarities with Queen Thea Muse and Phraataces (of Parthia). So much so that they are likely to be the next generation of the same family.

is likely that Queen Thea Muse and her daughter Queen Helena settled in Palmyra, in eastern Syria.

he Talmud contains a number of witty conundrums, written by Johanan (Saul-Josephus) which confirm that Jesus was involved in the Jewish War of AD 67 - 70.

Following the destruction of Jerusalem, the royal family of Jesus and Mary were reduced to exile and poverty.

*1 As was mentioned in *Cleopatra to Christ*, Sapphias was derived from the Greek *sapphiros* σαπφείρος meaning ‘sapphire’ or perhaps ‘lapis lazuli’, which are both blue gemstones. This, I suggested, was the reason for Mary’s ubiquitous depiction in blue robes. However, since the scribes loved indulging in wordplay this reasoning can be taken one step further, for the word *sapphiros* may have been derived from the Hebrew *sappir* ספיר which not only refers to a ‘sapphire’ but also to a ‘cup for holding blood’. In other words, the blue gemstone was also the Holy Grail, and the Grail did indeed refer to both a sacred stone and Mary Magdalene and her ‘Grail’ womb.

*2 In fact, this sect sounds like a forerunner of the Hellfire Club, a sixteenth century English dining club for the inordinately wealthy, which still appears to be thriving among the graduates of Oxford and

*3 This 'defilement' and the resulting inscription may also simply be because Queen Helena had a miscarriage. Niddah 21b of the Talmud states that the aborted foetus should be cut open, and if it contains blood the mother is unclean and ritually defiled!

*4 I contacted a historian living in Mosul who was absolutely certain that Queen Helena came from his city. Upon asking him what evidence there was in the museums of the region, he pointed me towards Josephus Flavius' *Antiquities*!

*5 The *sampser* was probably based upon the *sampson* σαμψων meaning 'like the Sun'. This was an orb, just as Queen Elizabeth II held in her hand during her 1953 coronation.

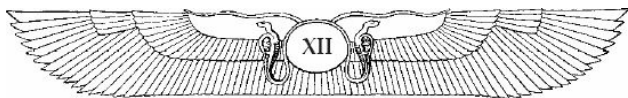
*6 What were they inspecting the beds for? Bedbugs? Stains?

*7 Note again how the Talmud works and how it secretes its vital information under layer after layer of deliberate mistranslations, homophones, puns and

other literary devices. There must be a wealth of new information to be found here, if only we could unlock it all.

*8 Talmudic notes confuse this King Jannaeus with King Jannai (104-78 BC), which is odd considering they have already said, in Yebamoth 61a, that King Jannai was King Agrippa II.

*9 In the equivalent version of this in the notes for Sanhedrin 107a, Jesus is called Elisha. This new name for Jesus has arisen because within the gospels Jesus was occasionally confused with Elias (Elijah), an Old Testament prophet.



Palmyra, Bride of the Desert

Palmyra, Bride of the Desert, city of a lost civilisation, metropolis of the legendary Queen Zenobia. We were looking for a wealthy principality that could be closely linked to the destinies of Judaea, Parthia and Rome; and in the history of Palmyra and its famous queen(s), we find just such a city.

Palmyra was an oasis town on

the camel caravan route from Emesa (Homs) to the Euphrates river, a trade route that bridged the major empires of Parthia and Rome. But perhaps the imagery that this description provides is misleading, for Palmyra was no desert village; instead, it was a vast city with a temple complex to rival that of Jerusalem itself. But why do we find such a massive city in the wastes of the Badiyat esh Sham, the Great Syrian Desert? Was this great wealth really a result of simple trade and commerce?

Personally, I think not. The history of Palmyra gives us an alternative reason for this great wealth, for the common thread that runs through all of Palmyran history from the first century onwards is independence from political control and independence from taxes. Evidence in the early period is confused, but the Palmyran

schedule of taxes that was discovered in the ruins of the city, and the fact that Emperor Tiberius sent his nephew Germanicus to negotiate with the ruling council, suggests that Palmyra was independent of Rome throughout the first century AD.¹

The later evidence is more certain, and in AD 129 Emperor Hadrian visited Palmyra and granted it the title 'The Free City', and this continued Palmyra's right to collect its own taxes and decide its own affairs free of Roman control. Likewise, Emperor Caracalla in AD 212 again granted the city the *Jus Italicum* or freedom from Roman political and financial controls, in exchange for 'guarding the eastern borders of the Roman Empire'. Thus, Palmyra was still a tax-free city after some two hundred years of expansion and

prosperity, a city whose primary role had remained much the same: to act as a buffer state between Rome and Parthia, so that Rome could reduce its forces in that region.

Why is this important, when deciding exactly who the Palmyrans were? Well, we have already come across this situation before, except Josephus Flavius calls the leader who established tax-free cities in eastern Syrio-Jordan, Judas-Zamaris the Babylonian Jew from Gamala. Significantly, this tax-free status was granted to Judas-Zamaris in order that these new cities might protect the Syrio-Judaeian eastern border, just as Palmyra had been instructed to do. Judas-Zamaris (Monobazus, Phraataces) is the individual who I have already equated with the husband of Queen Thea Muse Ourania and the

flight of this royal family from Babylon (Parthia) to Syria with 600 mounted archers. In a similar fashion, the independent army of Palmyra consisted of mounted archers, who were active during the Judaean Civil War.

Remember that the Jewish Civil War was essentially a dispute about the tax-free status of these eastern provinces, a lucrative concession that Rome was seeking to overturn. Therefore, Palmyra would have been involved in this taxation dispute as much as the city of Gamala or the Galilean Sect of Judas-Zamaris or Jesus-Izas and James.

But if the Palmyrans had been substantially Jewish, as was Judas-Zamaris, and involved in Jewish politics and religion through the activities of Helena of Adiabene (Julia-Mary), they would surely have

left behind evidence of this belief system in their city. Indeed they did just that, for many of the doorposts on the dwellings in Palmyra had the typical Judaic *mezuzah* or doorpost sign,² which reads (in part):

Hear, O Israel,
Jehovah our God is
one Jehovah ...
And you shall
write them on the
doorposts of your
house, and on your
gates.^{B3}



Fig 12.1
Vine imagery at
Palmyra.

This exodus of a wealthy royal family out of Babylon (Parthia) may also explain the sudden rise of Palmyra from obscurity to great wealth and power. This city was indeed a profitable trading center on the great caravan routes, but this trade is not

what made the town boom in such an extraordinary fashion. What propelled Palmyra both financially and politically was the arrival of an exiled queen of Parthia (Persia) – Queen Thea Muse Ourania, and her daughter Julia-Helena. They arrived in this small oasis town with a complete retinue of courtiers, artisans, administrators and a private army too; plus substantial coffers brimming with gold. Parthia had not wanted a civil war with their errant queen, so they had bought her off with a liberal proportion of the Parthian treasury. Thea Muse had negotiated the ultimate in golden good-byes, and gone to live in a desert oasis. As Iain Browning says:

In just over a century Palmyra had gone from being an out-of-the-way village in the back of beyond, to a metropolis whose fame, wealth

and glamour were attracting immigrants from all over the world.⁴

And this exponential growth was not due to a few camel caravans carrying spice and hash, it was due to the arrival of an entire exiled micro-nation in the town, and a rather wealthy micro-nation it was too. In addition to all this, Thea Muse had cunningly arranged with the Roman and Judaeian authorities that Palmyra would never be taxed, as long as she maintained secure borders between Rome and Parthia. Emperor Augustus and Herod Philip, who understood the Parthian cavalry's ability to destroy entire legions, readily accepted this proposal and so Palmyra became a political and financial free city – a tax-haven in the desert. It was this brimming Palmyran treasury, plus the lure of tax-free status for all citizens,^{*1} which propelled

Palmyra from obscurity to wealth and power. No doubt there was also a degree of playing one superpower against the other, favouring Rome then Parthia in turn, and receiving tribute from both sides in the process. As Pliny the Elder says:

Palmyra is a noble city because of its location ... from every side great stretches of sand surround her ... and nature isolates her from the rest of the world. Enjoying certain privileges from the two great empires, Rome and Parthia, Palmyra is sought out whenever disputes occur.⁵

This sudden rise in status may be why the name 'Palmyra' was adopted for this city. The original name for this city was Tadmor תַּדְמוֹר which was derived from Tamar תָּמָר, with both meaning 'palm'; which is a logical name for an oasis city, especially as Palmyra is surrounded by palm trees.

It is said that there are some ancient records of kings writing to Tadmor, like Taglath Phlaser of Assyria in the nineteenth century BC, but I don't think that this is true. It is much more likely that the king was writing to Tadmor in Egypt – the city of Tanis in the Nile Delta. Remember that until the first century AD and the arrival of Queen Thea Muse, Palmyra was no more than a village, and so it is unlikely that King Taglath Phlaser would have been writing to a village.

However, the name 'Tadmor' was certainly used for this town from the first century onwards, and so the name may actually have a more esoteric connotation. The Greek word for a palm tree is a *phoenix* φοινίξ, and this is a name that may refer to Palmyra's sudden flowering rather than a palm tree. Like Tanis in the Nile

Delta, it is possible that Tadmor (Palmyra) was so named because it rose, phoenix-like, out of the desert on the back of a huge inward investment, courtesy of an exiled royal family. In addition, the Egypto-Persian royal family of Thea Muse was also rising once again, Phoenix-like, out of the desert, and so Tadmor, Phoenix or Palmyra would all have been fitting titles for the city whichever way one looks at the situation. Phoenix in Arizona was so named for this very same reason, for it too rose phoenix-like out of the desert and so Phoenix Arizona could equally be called 'Palmyra'.

Interestingly, one of the symbols that the Palmyrans adopted for their temples was the Sun-god Ra in the form of an eagle – the Phoenix of Palmyra – and we shall see this same

Phoenix-eagle symbology on an American seal in a later chapter. This symbology also gives us some links to Egypt, which is not something that one might initially assume upon a tour of Palmyra, for the city does not look overly Egyptian. But if this was the city in which Thea Muse settled and from which Julia-Helena of the Adiabene and Jesus of Gamala came, then one would expect a significantly Egyptian culture. In fact, there is a lot of Egyptian symbology in and around Palmyra, but much of it is overlaid with Greek culture, and one suspects that this may represent a degree of pragmatism within the controlling royal family.

Symbols may change and one can move with the times, but the underlying message can still remain the same; and a good example of this is the

image of the flying Sun-disk of Ra. In Judaic symbology this flying Sun-disk became two palm fronds, with the palm fronds mimicking the wings of the flying Sun-disk. This is how the linguistic link between the fabulous Phoenix-bird and a common palm tree was derived in the first place (*phoenix* means 'palm tree'). See the book *Eden* for an example of a Latvian synagogue that uses this exact same Egypto-Judaic palm-frond symbolism, for the Sun-god Ra, over its Egyptian-style doorway. However, in Palmyra this same Egyptian symbol of the flying Sun-disk became an eagle carrying a sprig of oak. The Temple of Baal (Bel) contains a good example of this imagery on the lintel of a doorway, the exact same location that the flying Sun-disk of Ra would occupy on the entrance to an Egyptian temple.

However, this carving was so worn and the lighting so poor that an image of this eagle was not possible, so the following image is from a Palmyran mantelpiece instead.⁶

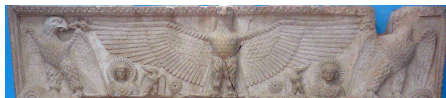


Fig 12.2 A mantelpiece bearing the eagle of Ra. The same eagle imagery on the door-lintel of the Temple of Bel has exactly the same symbolism as the flying Sun-disk of Ra. Note also the Sun-halos on the people.

Further links between Palmyra and Egypt can be seen in the embalming techniques that were used. Robert Wood, the venerable eighteenth century explorer and historian, says of the mummies of Palmyra:

By comparing the linen, the manner of

swathing, the balsam and other parts of the mummies of (Egypt) with those of Palmyra, we found their methods of embalming exactly the same ... Their funeral customs were from Egypt, their luxury was Persian and their letters and arts were from the Greeks.⁷

So the Palmyrans had Egyptian, Persian and Greek influences, which is exactly what one would expect of a Greco-Egyptian queen who had lived in Persia.

Then there is the entrance gate to the Temple of Bel (Baal), which is an exact copy of the Egyptian equivalent. The temple itself is built in the Greek tradition, with a curtain of huge majestic columns surrounding a rectangular hall. The Temple of Apollo in Delphi looked very similar, as indeed did the Parthenon. The precinct of the Temple of Bel was set out in an enormous rectangle, and the units of measure being used in its design were

most certainly Egyptian, as one might expect. The cubits in use here were the Common and the Royal or Thoth cubits of Egypt, the sacred measure that was used on the pyramids themselves.






Significantly, the measurements on this site also used the larger Thoth rod, which measures 5.5 cubits, a unit of measure that came directly from the Great Pyramid. This is an unusual length for a measurement system, and its origin lies in the fact that the Great Pyramid was designed as a physical representation of the Pi fractional equivalent of $22 : 7$. The base measurements of this pyramid were formed from the numerator in this fraction, the number 22, and if we divide the number 22 by 4 we arrive at this peculiar rod-length of 5.5. However, this was a very sacred mathematical length and its continued

usage gives us a positive Egyptian link not only with Palmyra but also with England, for it was only in England (and later in America) that this sacred measurement system survived. The English rod length was, of course, 5.5 yards instead of 5.5 cubits, and so the essence of this Egyptian and Palmyran measurement system has somehow ended up in England. The agent for this transference was probably Jesus himself, as will be discussed more fully in Chapter XV. The design of the Temple of Bel was quite complex, it being infused with astronomical numerology, and so further details on its metrology have been relegated to the appendix.

While the equally fabulous Jerusalem Temple is said to have sported two bronze pillars, the Palmyran Temple of Bel had massive

stone pillars with bronze capitals and soffits. This is an unusual design that I have not seen anywhere else in the Empire, and for a very good reason. Each of these bronze capitals must have weighed a tonne or two and bronze was a very expensive commodity in this era, which makes each of these capitals hugely expensive. But there were thirty nine of these capitals around the temple, and if every one weighed in at a tonne, just for example, then there were around forty tonnes of bronze just in the capitals alone, disregarding the soffits. Unfortunately, the capitals have long since been looted and so we do not know exactly how heavy they were. But we do know that this temple must have been an impressive sight when newly constructed, and was probably one of the most expensive temples in

the whole Empire.

Bel (Bol Boλ or Baal Βααλ meaning 'lord' or 'master') was the primary Palmyran deity and his wife was called Belti, a goddess who was overtly linked to Astarte (or Isis), the wife of Osiris. Thus Bel was a representation of Osiris, and his wife simply used the Egyptian 't' feminine ending – just as the Egyptians did with Asar    (Osiris) and Ast   (Isis). The Palmyran trinity of gods was therefore Egyptian in origin, just as were the Nazarene deities. The three main Palmyran gods were Bel representing Osiris, Yarhibol representing the Sun and Aglibol representing the Moon. In Egyptian theology these three were Osiris, Horus and Thoth, while in Masonic theology the symbology behind these same deities is represented by the three

pillars of the First Degree tracing board. Upon the masonic tracing board, Bel (Osiris) is the central pillar, with the Sun and Moon on either side.

Other Egyptian deities among the Palmyran pantheon include Bel-amun, which is a combination of Bel (Osiris) and the Egyptian Amun; and Bel-shamin, which is another version of this same god, except in using the Semitic *shamash* שמש meaning 'Sun' instead of the Egyptian Amun. Greek deities in Palmyra included Athene Parthenos, who was very popular and had her own temple; Allath, the Arabic version of Athene; and Tyche or Fortuna, the goddess of destiny.⁸ The Palmyra museum also states that sacred *betyls*, or meteorites, were venerated at Palmyra, although no extant images of them were available. This may be

important in later chapters.

Names

Perhaps the most interesting link between the biblical family and the people of Palmyra is through their very similar names. We have already seen how one of the family names at Palmyra was Bene Yadi-bol, which translated very nicely into Yadi-Bene (Adiabene), and so the term 'Adiabene' may refer more to a family than a location for a kingdom. However, while I was in the Damascus museum, another name caught my eye; sufficiently so to make me take a pace backwards and trip over a small step. I had just entered the reconstructed tomb of Yarhai (Yahai), which had been discovered in Palmyra in 1934. This name is based upon Yahai-bol, the

name of one of the Palmyran gods, but if readers don't find that name significant, perhaps I should point out that the Koran calls John the Baptist, Yahia.

O Zakariya! We give thee good news of a son: His name shall be Yahia: upon none by that name have We conferred distinction before.[K9](#)

Some English translations of the Koran use the name 'John' in this verse, but this translation is incorrect, for 'Yahia' is not the same name as 'John'. The name 'John' was derived from the Hebrew and Greek Johanan יוחנן or Johannes Ιωάννης, and this is quite a different name, even in the Arabic. The answer to this muddle is not a poor koranic transliteration, but the fact that John the Baptist had two names. As the Mandaean Encyclopaedia says of John

the Baptist:

Yuhana: John, especially John the Baptist, called also Yahia Yuhana.¹¹

So John the Baptist was called Yahia Yuhana (Yahia John), and so the Bible and the Koran were both right, but each has recorded a different name of the Baptist. Most Mandaean names are double, as is this name, and the first of these names is called the *malwasha* or zodiac name. So Yahai is actually the zodiac name for John the Baptist, and it is this name that we appear to have recorded in a Palmyran tomb. It is unlikely that this tomb actually belonged to John the Baptist himself, as it is thought to date from AD 108, and the fine detail in the carving does indeed suggest an early second century origin.¹² But this date is only two or three generations away from the death

of John the Baptist, and so it is entirely possible that this may have been the work of later members of the same family – descendants of John the Baptist. It is worth noting that the full title of one member of this same family was Marcos Olebius Yahai ben Hairan ben Abjor. From the reconstructed biblical genealogy in the previous chapter, it can be seen that the nephew of John the Baptist was also called Marcus.

But Yahai*² is not the only Palmyran family that betrays a nominative similarity with the familiar names of the New Testament. One of the primary families at Palmyra was called Zebida or perhaps Zebidee; while in the New Testament we have a pivotal character called Zebedee (Zebedios Ζεβεδαιοϛ), a name which was taken from the Hebrew Zabidiy

זְבִידִי. Zebedee was the father of the disciples James and John (not to be confused with James the brother of Jesus), and Zebedee's wife, who may have been called Mary, was present at the crucifixion. Significantly, Jesus met James and John while they were in a ship with their father, Zebedee.^{B13} In a similar fashion, Dr Adnan Khaled al-Asad speculates that the Palmyran character called Zebidee is also present on the only known Palmyran depiction of a sailing boat, because it was Zebidee who escorted caravans down the Tigris.¹⁴ Thus the biblical Zebedee and the Palmyran Zebidee were both ships' captains or owners of ships.

In the tomb of the three brothers at Palmyra we find another biblical name. It may be recalled that Simon Σίμων (Heb. Simeon שִׁמְעוֹן) of Bethany

has already been identified in the Talmud as being Simon Boethus, the father of Mary and Martha (the sister-wives of Jesus), who owned the house at Bethany where the anointing of Jesus took place. However, one of the main burials in this particular Palmyran tomb is of Bata, the daughter of Simeon.

The father of Zechariah is said to have been called Barachias (Barakhias) Βαραχίας, in the Bible, while another Palmyran tomb is dedicated to Baraki. The servant of the high priest was called Malchos (Malkhos) Μάλχος, while in Palmyra we find a Malco. Another early Palmyran text refers to someone called Mattabol. If we change the Palmyran god-name to the standard Greco-Judaic god-name suffix we actually derive Matthias Ματθαίας or, as the English

translations prefer, Matthew.¹⁵ Finally, within the list of Palmyran names given in a large tome on Palmyran texts, I was able to identify a Yacob (James), Mariah, Miriam (Mary), Martha, Bathomel (Bartholomew), and Nathan (Nathanael).¹⁶

Unfortunately, it is unlikely that any of these tombs could be the actual tombs of the various biblical families, as most of the dates given for these monuments range from the late first century AD through to the mid third century AD. However, there are exceptions to this, and the earliest inscriptions I was able to locate included the Matthew inscription, which is said to be mid first century, and the Tomb of Jamblichus, which dates from year 314 of the Seleucid era, or AD 3.¹⁷ In addition, many of the dates given in the reference works are

still uncertain at present, and at the very least this is evidence that families with New Testament names lived in Palmyra in the decades during and after the fall of Jerusalem. However, it is my belief that these names belonged to the founding families of Palmyra, who had been resident there since AD 4 (or AD 3) when the exiled royal family of Thea Muse founded the new city, and that is why they were so prominent and powerful. Given the links that have already been demonstrated between the biblical families and Palmyra, it is entirely possible that the biblical characters we are familiar with came from these very same founding families of Palmyra.

Last Supper

Even the style of these funerary

monuments look distinctly biblical. The sculpture in figure 12.3 depicts a Palmyran family partaking of a ritual meal, but since this sculpture is in a tomb one might suspect that this banquet was celebrated in the afterlife and so it could be considered to be a Last Supper. At this Last Supper, the men wear the ubiquitous two-piece Persian tunic and trousers, which looks very aristocratic seventeenth century, while lounging around on cushions and drinking a ritual toast from wide-brimmed bowls.

Note that this depiction, of a ritual Last Supper for the dead, is a traditional funerary style in Palmyra and nearly every tomb incorporates the same basic elements. There are always one or two figures in this afterlife feast, dressed in an elaborate two-piece Persian outfit and reclining on

cushions; while a smaller figure, perhaps a son, stands at their feet. More importantly, all these reclining figures hold a wide-brimmed dish, and this arrangement recalls a very familiar scene. Unlike Leonardo's depiction of the Last Supper, where all the disciples are seated at a long dining-table, the Gospel of John actually says of this final meal:

(The loved disciple), lying on Jesus' breast, said unto him, Lord, who is it (who will betray you)? Jesus answered, it is he to whom I shall give a morsel, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. [B18](#)

Here we have the disciples lounging upon each other, rather than sitting at a table, and the bowl that Jesus has is wide enough to easily dip bread into it; a scene which is all rather Palmyran in its composition. In Matthew and Mark,

this wide-brimmed bowl is called a *trublion* τρυβλιον or dish, rather than a cup, and more than one person can dip at a time which again suggests that the biblical Last Supper was using a wide-brimmed vessel. Given the apparent links we have already seen between the biblical family and Palmyra, it would seem likely that the New Testament Last Supper was a ritual Palmyran feast, involving the ubiquitous Palmyran dish, and it was this Palmyran chalice or *plemochoe* that became the central icon of the ritual of the Christian Eucharist (the bread and wine ritual).



Fig 12.3 The tomb of Yahai, Palmyra. Note the reclining positions and the sacred bowls, all of which is reminiscent of the biblical Last Supper.

Zodiac

John the Baptist's full titles may have included a zodiac name, Yahai, as we have seen; yet the zodiac was also a central component of Palmyran worship. However, in a similar fashion to the zodiacs in Egypt and the zodiacs in the Jewish synagogues of Israel and Jordan, the Palmyran zodiac and its symbols were not for public

consumption and so we don't find the imagery of the zodiac around the city.

The only place we do find this occult (concealed) imagery is in the magnificent Temple of Bel itself. There, in the northern *thalamos* or apse, set into the ceiling as a massive monolith, is a scene depicting the seven planets in a hexagonal array, surrounded by the twelve signs of the zodiac, as can be seen in figure 12.4. In fact, this use of a vast marble monolith of the zodiac set into the ceiling of a temple is exactly the same as can be found at the Temple of Dendera in Egypt. Thus the architecture and symbolism of this Palmyran zodiac is pure Egyptian, as were most of their gods, which again confirms the cultural and racial origins of the Palmyran leadership and royalty.

However, perhaps the best

illustration that the biblical family were not only related to Palmyra, but were resident there during the mid first century AD era, comes from the Talmud. As we saw in a previous chapter, Mary of Boethus-Nicodemus was mentioned on many occasions in the Talmud, where she is portrayed as the wealthiest woman in Jerusalem who owned a palace in the city and purchased the high priesthood for King Jesus (of Gamala). However, the Talmud does give us one further clue about Mary's heritage, for it actually mentions where she came from. This particular paragraph turned up at a late stage in the research and I was mildly surprised but nevertheless greatly elated to discover that the city in question was actually Palmyra:

It is said of Mary of Tarmud that one kind of blood was sprinkled on her behalf when she

was told that her daughter was dangerously ill. She went and found her dead and the sages told her to offer the remaining sacrifice after purification. [T19](#)

That this was the same Mary as Mary (Magdalene) Boethus is confirmed by the mention that she was a Nazarene, and was involved in the purification period of seven days (seven years), having had a ritual defilement. But in this extract, we get the additional detail that one of Miriam's (Mary's) daughters had died, and this may be another reason why she contracted this defilement. The text goes on to discuss whether a Nazarene or a high priest is defiled the most by a *meth mizwah* or unaccompanied dead body, and so this folio is all about ritual defilement – the same ritual defilement that Mary of Boethus contracted. Thus it is as certain as it can be in this research,

that this Mary was Mary Boethus.

In this quote, Mary of Boethus is being titled 'of Tarmud', so what does this title refer to? As we have seen, the original name for Palmyra was Tadmor, but the Talmud's accounts continuously mistranslate this name as 'Tarmud'. However, the marginal notes to the Talmud do confirm that this Tarmud was actually a reference to Tadmor, or Palmyra. This does mean, of course, that Mary Boethus – that is the biblical Mary Magdalene – came from Palmyra. Mary was a Palmyran, just as I suspected, and so she must have been a descendant of queens Helena and Thea Muse.

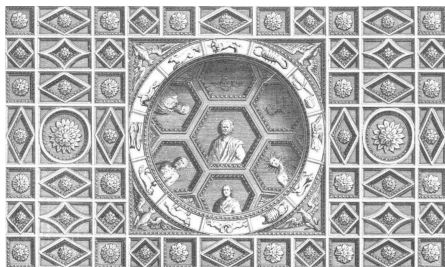


Fig 12.4 The seven planets in a hexagonal formation (top), with Jupiter surrounded by the six other planets. Surrounding the seven planets are the twelve signs of the zodiac. Temple of Bel, Palmyra. In addition, an image of an eagle as the Sun-disk of Ra lies on the entrance soffit, in the same position as the winged Sun-disk in

*Egyptian temples (middle). Temple of Bel,
Palmyra.*

*An outline of the Zodiac of Dendera is
included (left) for comparison.*

But if Mary was the daughter of Julia-Helena of Adiabene (Mary the Virgin), and she was indeed being inducted to the Nazarene Sect, then in Judaic eyes she would have to be accepted into Judaism as a proselyte: or someone who is allowed to convert to Judaism, just as Queen Helena herself is said to have done. Not everyone is allowed to do this, but two of the very few peoples or nations who were allowed to 'convert' to Judaism at this time were the Cordyenians and the Tadmorians (the Babylonians and Palmyrans). So Mary would have been allowed to 'convert', as did Helena, and this concession perhaps

demonstrates the closeness of Palmyran culture and theology to the Judaism that was being practised at that time in Jerusalem.^{T20}

Iconography

This is all very interesting. We now have a city that can be linked to the legendary kingdom of Adiabene, and this is not a city that is located hundreds of miles away in northern Iraq, but is located instead in an influential region on the borders of Rome and Parthia. Here, we find gods, names and personalities that can all be linked back to the New Testament texts. But if Palmyra was the foundation upon which the Galilean Sect and the later sect of Simple Judaism (Christianity) were founded, then perhaps we might be able to see

commonalities in the symbolism between these two cultures.

Take the traditional image of a saint, for instance. Within Christian iconography, the disciples and saints are always depicted with a Sun-halo behind their heads. One suspects that this type of iconography originated in Egypt, with the veneration of the Aton-Ra Sun-disk of Akhenaton, but in Egypt the Sun-god was not shown in quite the same manner. It was not until the Greeks borrowed this symbolism for their Sun-god Helios that we begin to see rays of sunlight darting from behind the head of a god-figure. So what of the Palmyrans, what imagery did they use? In fact, it would appear that it was the Palmyrans who developed this Helios imagery into a common depiction for gods and demigods alike, and so we see a

proliferation of this Sun-ray imagery throughout the city. Thus Palmyran iconography is the precursor to Christian symbolism, with both god-figures and important individuals of the city all wearing Sun-halos, to show to those with ‘eyes to see’ that they worshipped the Sun-god, Aton-Ra.



Fig 12.5 A Palmyran aristocrat wearing the ‘Christian’ Sun-halo (left). Jesus wearing a Sun-halo, by Simone Martini (right).

Another piece of iconography that is well known from the later Christian era is the angel, a mythical messenger

from the gods who assists with matters on Earth. But where did this imagery come from? In the Greek an angel is an *aggelos* ἄγγελος, while in the Hebrew it is a *malek* מַלְאָךְ, with both words simply referring to a messenger or an ambassador; so there is plenty of scope here for mistaking a king's ambassador (*adhon malek* אֲדוֹן מַלְאָךְ) with god's angel (*adhon malek* אֲדוֹן מַלְאָךְ), for it is exactly the same notation. Surprisingly, both of these angelic names are also the names of Palmyran individuals (Egaly and Maliku), who may therefore have been ambassadors.

In traditional Christian symbology an angel is a figure in a white gown sporting swan's wings, and yet this is exactly the same symbology we find in Palmyran tombs. The figure illustrated here, from the Tomb of the Three Brothers, is actually

the Greek Nike (Latin Victory), who stands on the globe of the world and holds an image of the deceased above her head. The entire composition is surprisingly Christian in execution, and the globe of the Earth demonstrates that the Palmyrans were far ahead of the later Christian popes – for there were no flat-Earthers in Palmyra.²²

Finally, perhaps we should also mention the language used by the Palmyrans. One of the primary languages of a royal family of Egyptian origins would have been Aramaic: with both Aramaic and Hebrew being daughter languages of ancient Egyptian. But since this particular royal family had also spent a number of years in Alexandria and Parthia, which were both Greek-speaking in this era, they would have been equally fluent in Greek. This is the exactly the situation

we find in Palmyra, where Aramaic and Greek were the primary languages of the people. In a similar fashion, the primary language of Saul-Josephus was Greek and he also spoke Aramaic. Likewise, from the little information available, Jesus also spoke Aramaic and Greek.²³



Fig 12.6 Palmyran angels from the

frieze adorning the Temple of Bel (left). Palmyran Madonna and Child from the first century AD, Tomb of the Three Brothers (upper left). Palmyran angel standing on the globe of the Earth, Tomb of the Three Brothers (upper right).

Zenobia

The central position that Palmyra had, in both the biblical story and the historical account of the Jewish War, is why the first book that Saul-Josephus wrote, *The Jewish War*, was dedicated to this region and most probably to these people. This entire literary exercise was designed not just to compose a history book to record the events of the Jewish War for posterity, but to create a propaganda tool, designed to show the Palmyrans and others the might and power of Rome. This is why the first copies of *The*

Jewish War did not go to Judaea, Celtae, Gaul or Pannonia, where the Romans still had civil disputes; instead, Saul-Josephus:

Composed the (*Jewish War*) in the language of our country (Aramaic) and sent it to the Upper Barbarians ... the Parthians, Babylonians, the remotest Arabians and those of our nation beyond the Euphrates with the Adiabene.^{J24}

This is interesting, for the first copies of *The Jewish War* were sent out, in Aramaic, to the Parthians, Babylonians and Adiabenes; in other words, they were sent out to the very same peoples who I have said caused the Jewish War in the first place. This was a warning to both Palmyra and Parthia that Rome would not tolerate dissent, and had the means to quell any unrest.

This is, no doubt, why emperors Vespasian and Titus suffered such a



*Fig 12.7 The
angel of apples
and fruits,
Palmyra.*

slimy,
insufferable,
quisling-like
character as Saul-
Josephus-Johanan.
He was useful,
very useful, in
spreading the
message of Roman
military

superiority and the advantages of
embracing the *Pax Romana*. In
addition, his strange religious books
peddling Simple Judaism for Gentiles
were equally useful in curbing the
spread of the highly divisive form of
orthodox Judaism that had caused the
civil war in the first place. Saul-
Josephus was useful, and humouring
the guy was a small price to pay for
peace in the eastern provinces.

This represents an account of the

history and culture of the city of Palmyra up to the end of the first century AD. But the town did not decline at that point, for she rose in power and influence throughout the second and third centuries AD. It is in the third century that we meet another prominent queen from this same city, the legendary Queen Zenobia, a formidable matriarch who again dared defy the might of Rome. But if Thea Muse and Helena had been bold in their demands, Zenobia was pushing the boundaries towards the limits of foolhardiness. Like King Jesus-Izas before her, Queen Zenobia's demand was no longer for a tax-free state, but for control over the whole Roman Empire and for her son to become emperor. And she nearly succeeded too. We shall meet Queen Zenobia again in the final chapters, and see

once again the rich Egypto-Persian heritage of the Palmyran monarchy.

summary

Both Queen Thea Muse Ourania and Queen Helena of Adiabene fled from Parthia (Persia), and the circumstances of these exoduses are very similar.

Palmyra was a sleepy oasis village until the first century AD, when it suddenly became a great metropolis. It is likely that these wealthy royal exiles from Parthia precipitated this sudden growth and expansion.

Palmyran culture, theology and symbology share a number of equivalences with New Testament accounts.

The Talmud suggests that Mary Magdalene came from Palmyra.

As speculated previously, it is likely that Thea Muse and Helena were part of the biblical family, with Helena being Mary the Virgin.



Plate 30. The ruined city of Gamala (Umm el-Jimal) northeast of modern Amman. This is likely to have been one of the cities controlled by Jesus of Gamala in the first century AD, and destroyed in the AD 749 earthquake. The architecture here is much more functional than in the major Roman cities of the Judaeo-Syrian Decapolis.



Plate 31. A gilded bronze statue of Hercules, originally from Pompeii. Note the club and the lion skin.

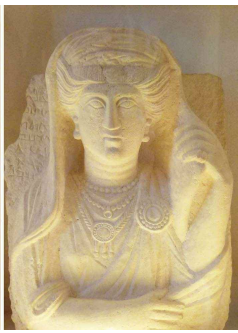


Plate 32. Ruined city of Bet Shean (Scythopolis), south of Tiberias. This is one of many cities that were deserted after the great earthquake of AD 749. Originally, all

the columns were laid out on the ground in the same orientation, but many have been re-erected.



Plates 33 & 34. The exterior and interior of the tomb of the Elabel family. It is located in the Valley of the Tombs at Palmyra, and is thought to date from the first century AD. Left and right are ‘racks’ for individual sarcophagi, and the entire tower can take some 350 burials.



Plates 35 & 36. Two aristocratic ladies from Palmyra. These sculptures were originally the decorative doors or plugs that sealed sarcophagi into the racks in the tower-tombs. Note the apparent wealth of Palmyra, both in the jewellery portrayed and the quality of the workmanship. Their fashions are similar to Phoenician ladies from Carthage.



Plate 37. The main street of Palmyra, which was left sandy to protect the feet of camels.



Plate 38. Temple of Bel, Palmyra. The general layout of the temple is Judaeo-Greek, while the entrance is Egyptian in design. The Temple was originally surrounded by huge columns with bronze capitals, making this one of the finest temples in the Roman Empire.



Plate 39. Tomb of Yahai, originally from Palmyra but now in the Damascus Museum. This may well be the family tomb of John the Baptist, who was known as Yahia.

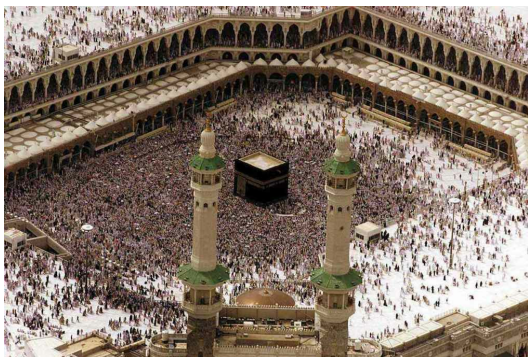


Plate 40. Circling the Ka'ba at Mecca, which is symbolic of the circling of the Cosmos around the Earth.



Plate 43. Glastonbury Tor. (left)
Plate 44. The Round Table in the
Great Hall at Winchester, a copy
of the Round Table of King
Arthur. The image of Arthur is
that of Henry VIII. (right)



Plate 45. A reconstruction of the entrance to the Lunt Roman fort at Coventry, England. The layout is typical of early Roman fortresses, but the Dewa fortress was built in stone.



Plate 46. Site of the Temple of the Zodiac, in the Dewa fortress, Chester. The site was

rebuilt as a shopping center, so it is unlikely that the foundations of the Temple have survived.



Plate 47. The expensive lead water-pipe, inscribed with the name of Vespasian, that supplied the central icon or ornament in the Temple of the Zodiac.

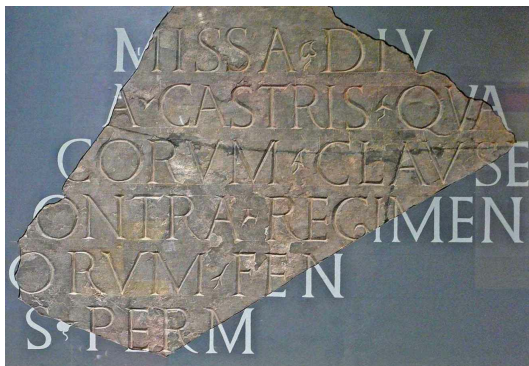


Plate 48. Part of the inscription that may have been attached to the Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa.



Plate 49. Coin of Queen Thea Muse Ourania, (c. 4 BC) (above).



Plate 50. The Elagabal Sun-stone of Emperor Elagabalus, being paraded around Rome on a chariot. Note the eagle on the stone – a symbol of the flying Sun-disk of Ra and also of the Phoenix.

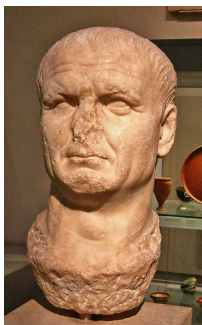
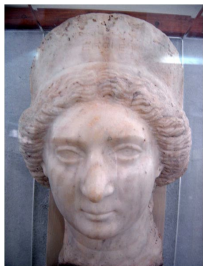


Plate 51. Bust of Queen Thea Muse Ourania, National Museum of Iran. (left)

Plate 52. Emperor Vespasian (AD 69 - 79). (right)



Plate 51. Emperor Titus (AD 79 - 81).
(left)

Plate 51. Emperor Elagabalus, (AD 218 -
222). (right)



Plate 55-57. Three phallic Sun-stones. The
Omphalos of Delphi, the Lia Fail of Galway,

and a Lingam from India. Note that the Lingam has been liberally basted with oils, just as the Elagabal and Jacob's stone were likewise anointed.

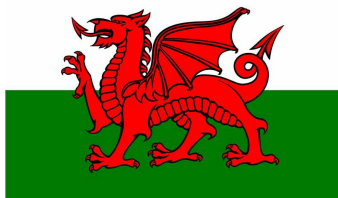
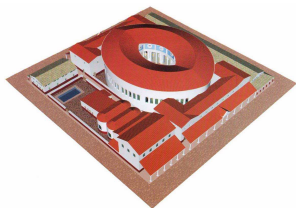


Plate 58. The Dewi – the *Y Ddraig Goch* or red-dragon of Wales, King David, and possibly also of the Dewa fortress.



Plates 59. Artist's impression of the Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa, Chester, with the courtyard open to the skies.

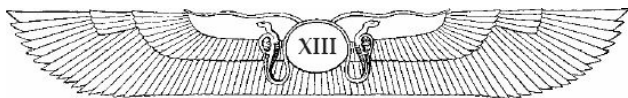


Plates 60. Interior of the Temple of the Zodiac, showing the grandeur and opulence of this great temple, and all this at a time when Roman Britain was in its infancy. With thanks: Julian Baum - Take 27 Ltd. Dr David Mason. Peter Carrington - Chester Archaeology.

*1 Free from Roman taxes. The Palmyrans had their own taxes, which were mainly centered upon the taxation of passing caravans, although prostitutes were also taxed. The list of Palmyran taxes is now housed in the Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg.

*2 An alternative (Mandaean) rendering of Yahai is Yahya, and perhaps here we can see a faint echo of the chief minister under Pharaoh Akhenaton, who was called Yuya. My previous works have already demonstrated the close links between the family of Akhenaton and the Hyksos-Israelites, and thus their links to the New Testament family. In support of this assertion, one of the other tombs discovered at Palmyra was the tomb of a family called Atenaten. This is an unusual name that I have not come across in any other context, so a link back to Pharaoh Akhenaton is not unjustified, especially if the Israelites were partly composed of the exiled people from Akhenaton's city of Amarna. Even the style of headdress the Palmyrans traditionally wore is fairly

unique and greatly reminiscent of Nefertiti's tall, blue headdress.



Hero the Magician

In the final chapters we shall be discussing the role of sacred stones within Judaism in general and the Galilean Sect in particular. Apparently, some of these sacred stones were lodestones – magnetic, metallic rocks that may well have been of meteoric origin, and it was this strange magnetism and their dramatic, fiery appearance in the skies that was the foundation of their sacredness. After all, if the gods had sought fit to deliver a rock from the stars to mankind, in

such a dramatic fashion, then it must be rather special and worthy of veneration.

However, in the course of investigating this topic it became apparent that magnetism was being used by engineers and magicians in the first century AD, to both entertain and beguile the people. The most famous and successful of these engineers was Hero (Heron) of Alexandria, who was conjuring up all kinds of weird and wonderful mechanical gadgets and steam engines, that both entertained the royalty and dumfounded the cowed masses in the temples. His work, which is said to have comprised over a hundred different machines, included a slot machine, talking icons and animals, steam 'engines', automatic doors, and even a flying chariot raised into the air above the statue of Jupiter

by magnets.

Many of these gadgets were designed to entertain, but some of the more elaborate deceptions were housed in the temples and were deliberately designed to convince the masses of the power of the gods. It is even said that Hero gained many new commissions in order to combat the appeal and threat posed by Saul-Josephus' new cult of Simple Judaism. However, if Hero, the master engineer and magician, was able to create so much mechanical technology in this early era, it is unlikely in the extreme that the emperors of Rome would have been overly impressed with static lumps of stone: the ubiquitous Omphalos stones that graced many a Roman temple.

In which case, the many granite, sandstone and basalt sacred stones that

have appeared in various locations over the millennia are merely copies and fakes; while the original sacred stone must have been both metallic and magnetic, and it was this strange other-worldly force-field that gave this stone much of its sacredness.

That this magnetic stone was at some point in time located in the Temple of Jerusalem (or at least a component of the Galilean Sect's creed) is confirmed in the Talmud. In the same section where Simon Boethus was identified with the sacred Shatiya stone of Judaism, the Talmud says that Gehazi had been excommunicated. This was the lying and deceitful disciple who we met in a previous chapter and have already identified with Saul-Josephus.

What had (Gehazi) done? — Some say he hung a loadstone (magnetic stone) above the

Golden Calf, and thus suspended it between heaven and earth (by its magnetism). Others maintain that he engraved the Divine Name in the calf's mouth, whereupon it proclaimed, 'I am the Lord thy God, and Thou shalt have no other gods before me.'^{T1}

This sounds remarkably similar to Hero's trick with the flying magnetic chariot, while the talking calf is almost identical to Hero's talking birds and groaning icons, which were used in temples to beguile the uneducated proletariat. But why was all of this trickery being mentioned in relation to Gehazi (Saul-Josephus), the rejected and excommunicated disciple of King Jesus? The Talmud continues, and again speaks of this disciple (Gehazi) worshipping this same sacred stone:

One day while Rabbi Jesus was reciting the Shema, (disciple Gehazi) came before him. Rabbi Jesus' intention was to receive him and he made a sign to him with his hand, but the

disciple (Gehazi) thought he was repelling him. So he went and set up a stone and worshipped it ... A Master (not Jesus) has said: The disciple practised magic and led Israel astray.[T2](#)

Was this act so strange to Judaism that the authors of the Talmud called it magic? Hardly likely, for this is exactly the same action as Jacob performed in Gen 28:18. If Jacob, one of the great founder-leaders of the Jewish nation, could worship before a stone, I cannot see why Gehazi should be accused of magic (apart from the extra detail of the stone levitating itself by magnetism). This demonstrates how far Judaism had deviated from its more Pagan Sun-and star-worshipping roots.

In previous chapters, we have already identified Gehazi as being Saul-Josephus, and yet here we have descriptions of him (or Jesus, depending on the text) worshipping a

sacred stone. The Talmud implies that Gehazi (Saul-Josephus) was excommunicated by King Jesus for this stone worship, but that is not so, for it has already been explained that this excommunication was really due to his calling Mary Magdalene (the mistress of the inn) 'narrow eyed' (a possible reference to a bastard). But how does all of this excommunication of disciples and worship of flying stones fit in with the life of the Greek mathematician and engineer called Hero? Surely, Greek science and engineering are concepts that are utterly detached from the spiritual world of the New Testament. Well, the Catholic Church would like you to think so, but the truth is more illuminating.

The true ancestry of Hero is unknown. He came from Alexandria in

Egypt, but Carl Boyer, a historian of science and mathematics, has said that his work and mathematics demonstrate that Hero must also have had Parthian and Greek influences. This is an ancestry that parallels very closely what we now know of King Jesus' family.³

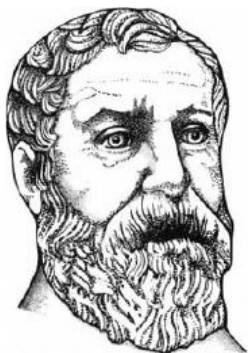


Fig 13.1 A lithograph of Hero of Alexandria.

The date of Hero's life and work is also unknown but extracts from Columella, a Roman agriculturalist, demonstrate that he was alive in AD 62. The current consensus of opinion is that Hero was born between AD 10 and 20, and died between AD 70 and 100;

dates that are firmly coincident with the era of the gospels being forged in this new chronology of the New Testament. Hero is known to have been resident in Alexandria, Egypt, and probably studied at the great Mouseion (or Musaeum), the Temple of the Muses. The Mouseion was less of a museum or a temple as we would understand it, and more of a university, a center of research and education that included the Great Library of Alexandria.

Remember, that King Jesus was exiled to Alexandria and, unlike the New Testament accounts, the Talmud indicates that Jesus was exiled there as an adult (probably in the early AD 60s). Since Jesus was a direct descendant of the Ptolemaic pharaohs of Egypt, through Queen Cleopatra and Queen Thea Muse, he would definitely have

studied at the Mouseion for it was Ptolemy I, Jesus' direct ancestor, who founded this very university. It is highly likely, therefore, that Jesus would have met and conversed with Hero in Alexandria. Indeed, not simply conversed with, for we shall see shortly that Jesus probably hired Hero to be his court magician.

Hero may have been an engineer of mechanical machines and contrivances, but he was equally known for his more serious works, including long and complicated treatises on mathematics, pneumatics,⁴ stereometrica, mechanics, geometry, surveying, propagation of light, optics, and engines of war. Much of this knowledge was learned and copied from the ancient scientists of Egypt, and so it is not known how much of this was original work. However,

where Hero does appear to have progressed well beyond the abilities of his peers and tutors is in the design and fabrication of machines. Hero had taken the ancient sciences and turned them into practical, and sometimes entertaining, physical devices.

In addition to machines for temple trickery, he designed and made a host of wonderful machines from automatic doors (operated by lighting a fire on the altar), to slot machines, life-sized robots, mechanical singing birds, self-



Fig 13.2 A steam turbine. We might attribute machines like this to Leonardo da Vinci, but this was actually

trimming wicks for		<i>constructed by</i>
lamps,	an	<i>Hero of</i>
odometer	or	<i>Alexandria in</i>
distance-		<i>the middle of</i>
measuring device,		<i>the first century</i>
the mechanism for		<i>AD.</i>

a siphoned flushing toilet, and a highly effective fire engine.*¹ He also produced the mechanical equivalent of a woman being sawn in half, with the sword instead cutting through the neck of a mechanical horse, while the head of the horse remained firmly but inexplicably fixed to its body. Such was this skill and novelty that he was known as Michanikos, the ‘Machine Man’.

In short, Hero was the Leonardo da Vinci of his day; a man whose skill and knowledge spanned the many sciences, and whose vision eclipsed the greatest minds of his day. Like

Leonardo, Hero was centuries, if not millennia, ahead of his time; a man who could have ushered in the Industrial Revolution during the first century AD, some sixteen centuries before it actually happened.

Here we have a remarkable individual, a man whose contraptions could utterly amaze and dazzle the public. However, like Leonardo, this skill did not go unnoticed by the powerful and the priesthood, for here was a man who could also convince the common people that god was actually present in a temple – for how else could these icons and animals move and speak? Like the Medieval Catholic Church, the Galilean Sect in particular was not above using a fraud or a fake, especially a highly visible one, to dupe their gullible congregations.

Thus, it is entirely possible that Hero of Alexandria came onto the Galilean Sect's payroll as King Jesus' court engineer and conjuror; just as Leonardo da Vinci became the court engineer and conjuror to several ecclesiastical masters, including the Vatican and Cesare Borgia, the son of Pope Alexander VI. Readers may primarily remember Leonardo as a painter and an engineer of futuristic machinery, but much of his work actually involved the design and fabrication of more mundane mechanical contraptions to entertain the aristocracy – like his mechanical knight and the walking lion.

Readers might be rather skeptical at this outlandish assertion, that Hero the mechanic and mathematician was closely connected with the Galileans, the Church of King

Jesus, for the New Testament is not exactly awash with mathematics or cunning contraptions. However, that perception would be totally wrong, for the gospels do contain an account of one of Hero's inventions.

Among Hero's many contraptions designed for entertainment, he created numerous trick jars and jugs that, through ingenious internal compartments, plumbing, siphons and air-holes, a magician could alternate between the pouring of water or wine from the same vessel. An original account and image of this device is contained in Hero's treatise on siphons, entitled '*A Vessel from which Wine or Water may be made to flow, separately or mixed*'. In fact, this trick of 'turning water into wine' was a favourite topic for Hero, for he produced no less than five

different arrangements for a vessel that could alternate between discharging water or wine.

However, in the Gospel of John we have a description of this very same device being used to entertain the family of King Jesus:

Jesus said unto them, 'Fill the water-pots with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. And he said unto them, 'Draw out now, and take it to the governor of the feast.' And they took it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it came from (but the servants which drew the water knew). The governor of the feast called the bridegroom ... and said ... you have kept the good wine until now.^{B5}

Oh what an embarrassment, what a collective humiliation for so much of mankind. This is supposed to be one of the primary miracles that Jesus performed, one of the central planks of Christianity that convinces millions of

people that Jesus was a god, and yet it was a simple mechanical device. Just like the miracle (the trick) of walking on water, the entire belief system of hundreds of millions of otherwise rational people has been built upon a mechanical device built by Hero of Alexandria! But, as the gospel says, ‘the servants who drew the water knew’ (that it was a trick), and we have a complete description of the design and operation of this same device from Hero himself. The instructions Hero left to posterity, say:

A jar can be made ... in such a way that, when wine and water are poured into it, it shall discharge at one time pure water, at another time unmixed wine, and, again, a mixture of the two.

We may ... pour out wine for some, wine and water for others, and mere water for those whom we wish to jest with.⁶

Does this description sound familiar? Hero built these magical jars and jugs to entertain the aristocracy: it was simply a jest, an entertaining party-piece for the host of a party. But the devious and lying Johanan-Saul-Josephus used an account of this party-trick to beguile and deceive the faithful of Simple Judaism. And the fools believed it!

Thus, the might of the Catholic Church was founded upon ‘miracles’ provided by Hero’s mechanical devices. But the greater tragedy of this adoption and deliberate misrepresentation of Hero’s mechanical devices is that the real science that underpinned these magical machines was suppressed by that same oppressive Church — they had discarded the very science that had created these ‘acts of god’ in the first

place and Hero, the temple magician, had been hoisted by his own petard.*² Thus progress in science was stalled and reversed by the very manifestation of that science, which had been interpreted as trivial ‘miracles’ and ‘acts of god’ by the dim-witted followers of Simple Judaism; and because of this, society was plunged into a Dark Age lasting a thousand years from which it was lucky to have ever recovered. All of this would be mighty hilarious if the repercussions for Western civilisation had not been so serious.

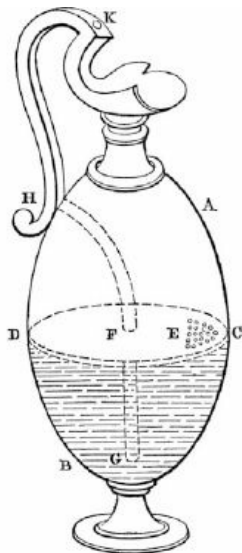
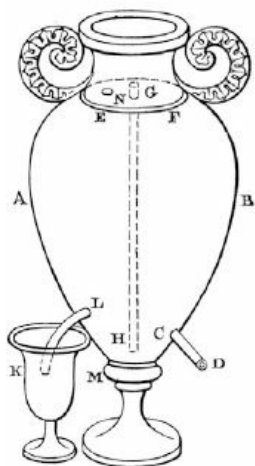


Fig 13.3 Two examples of Hero's trick jugs, for turning water into wine. They work through the principles of the syphon, differential air pressure, the vacuum and water surface tension. On the left is a trick amphora and on the right a trick prochous. See the appendix for further details.

Science and technology

The turning of the water into wine at the wedding at Cana was performed by King Jesus himself, and the master of ceremonies at this wedding thanked the bridegroom for this magical trick. This demonstrates that the account of this wedding at Cana was actually a description of Jesus' marriage to Mary Magdalene. The problem that remains is who exactly was Hero? Was he one of Jesus' brothers, one of his disciples, or simply a client who had been patronised (funded) by the wealthy and influential family of Jesus and Mary to provide party tricks for the family and for the Temple?

Jesus, as we saw earlier, was exiled to Alexandria in Egypt, where he could easily have met Hero at the Mouseion (the Temple of the Muses), and this meeting is all but confirmed by Jesus using one of Hero's favourite

conjuring tricks to ‘turn water into wine’ and amaze the guests that came to his wedding. With Jesus and Mary being such wealthy individuals, it is highly likely that a mad inventor like Hero would have appreciated a wealthy patron rather than a one-off sale, and so it is highly likely that Hero became permanently attached to the Galilean Sect as court entertainer.



Fig 13.4 The wedding at Cana, Carl Heinrich Bloch. The wine jars here should be made of metal, and of Hero's cunning design.

However, to have studied at the Mouseion would have meant that the family of Hero were themselves rather wealthy or aristocratic or both, for there was no state education in this era. So can we identify him at all in the historical record? Unfortunately not, but his name is common to this era. The name 'Hero' comes from *heros* ἥρως meaning 'hero'. However, the royal court of the Herods was also named *heros*, with the name 'Herod' (actually spelt as Herodes Ἡρώδης) meaning 'Figure of a Hero'. So all of the Herodian family, from King Herod the Great onwards, could be called 'Hero'. So was Hero a Herodian? Unfortunately we may never know, for

there is no evidence to guide us. All we do know is that it is highly likely that Hero became associated with the biblical family, and so a pseudonym of his may be lying in the biblical texts somewhere.*3

There is one final problem to cover here, and that is the fact that the Talmud mentions that Gehazi (Saul-Josephus) was playing around with magnetic stones and animals that spoke. If this really was Saul-Josephus, then he must have been fully aware of the presence of a sacred stone at the heart of the Galilean Sect, before he was excommunicated and founded Simple Judaism. But he chose not to use the veneration of this stone within his new Simple Judaism. Why?

The reasons for this are open to speculation. Perhaps Saul-Josephus never found the original sacred stone

after the fall of Jerusalem, for it had been secreted away and so he had no such magical stone with which to entertain the high echelons of the clergy (and thereby 'prove' the power of his god). Perhaps he already had his god, in the form of a deified King Jesus, and discovered that the concept of a personal, human god was much more persuasive to the common people than an inanimate (or partially animate) stone. People empathise with people more than they do with artifacts; especially when that person can be portrayed as a poor, downtrodden plebeian who suffered the humiliation of torture and even death. Everyone loves an underdog who can triumph over his cruel adversaries and that is, after all, the central component of every childhood fairy-tale. Saul-Josephus discarded the science of

Hero, and chose the fairy-tale instead – he had placed his trust in ‘faith’.

Conversely, Hero of Alexandria had devised much of modern scientific methodology, where a concept had to be proven mathematically, which is why Hero’s formula for the calculation of the area of a triangle is still in use today. It is fittingly called Hero’s Formula. However, Saul-Josephus stood all of this logical, scientific reasoning on its head and declared that the less evidence you have, the more true something is. This was the new religious doctrine of ‘faith’, a vacuous concept that led to the autocratic dogma of the Catholic Church. Scripture, history and science, to Simple Judaism, was what the priesthood declared it to be; even if this dogmatic ‘history’ or ‘science’ had no connection whatsoever with what

was observed in the real world. Scripture and science had entered the brave new world of the Emperor's New Clothes, just as politics, sociology and environmentalism have in our modern world – believe what we tell you, and disregard what you can see with your very own eyes.

The result of this sudden lurch away from Galilean *gnosis*, away from logical science, was a complete collapse in human understanding. The Catholic Church now had a stranglehold on learning, and only the doctrines that it deemed to be fit and proper were taught for centuries. Western civilisation had entered the Dark Ages. But what if the reverse had happened? What would have been the ramifications of Saul-Josephus being the loser rather than the victor in this titanic battle of the creeds. If Hero of

Alexandria had been appointed as the Chief Gnostic (Chief Scientist) of the Galilean-Nazarene King Jesus – King of Persia and Emperor of Rome – the Industrial Revolution may well have started in the second century AD. The first aircraft would probably have flown in the third century, while man may have walked on the Moon in the fourth century. In the twenty-first century, we may have already received word that the first human colony had arrived in the Alpha Centauri solar system, and were setting up their first city. This is the full scale of the tragedy that has befallen us.

This is why the most relevant of Dan Brown's novels is actually *Angels and Demons*, for the future of mankind will be decided by this titanic struggle between logic and faith, rather than by the discovery of a long-lost royal

family. Already, the malignant forces of fundamentalist faith are renewing their strength in the East and they are spreading their destructive tentacles ever westwards, threatening the very Enlightenment Era that brought us the Industrial Revolution and all of modernity. Fundamentalist faith can only survive in a dictatorial environment that suppresses all forms of enquiry, for any rational enquiry will instantly undermine the foundations of that very same fundamentalist faith. Conversely, science can never survive under a fundamentalist theological regime, for science is naturally curious; and so religious fundamentalism can only ever be synonymous with technological and economic stagnation and decline. Our very way of life is in great danger, so we cower and remain silent before

these threats of fundamentalist violence
at our peril.

summary

sacred lodestones (magnetic stones) were used in Galilean Judaism.

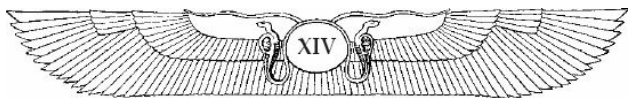
Hero of Alexandria designed mechanical devices in the first century AD that appeared to turn water into wine.

Jesus used this very same trick jug to create one of the most famous of biblical miracles. Amazingly, there are people alive today who still believe that this mechanical trick was an act of god.

*1 The design of this fire engine is the same as the engines that were used fifteen centuries later, to fight the Great Fire of London in 1666.

*2 From Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (iii, iv 207). A petard was a small bomb, and if it exploded prematurely a grenadier was 'hoisted (into the air) by his own petard'. In other words, he had been killed by his own bomb.

*3 Could Hero of Alexandria be Alexander the coppersmith, the man who Saul-Josephus hated and cursed so openly? See 2 Tim 4:14.



King Arthur-Jesus and the Grail

In the Great Hall of Winchester, there hangs an enormous and ancient round table on the gable wall. The table is robustly constructed from strong English oak and upon its face there are place-settings for twenty-four knights of the Round Table, plus a place at the 'head' of the table for King Arthur himself. The table is not the original

table of Grail legend, of course, which would have to date from at least the sixth century AD; nevertheless, it is still thought to have been constructed as far back as the thirteenth century, possibly by King Henry III. His descendant, Henry VII, was obviously another great fan of the Grail legends of the Round Table, for he named his eldest son Arthur. But Arthur died at the age of sixteen, in 1502, and so his younger brother, Henry, became king instead. This younger brother was the great Henry VIII, who saved Britain from a despotic Catholic theocracy, and he too must have perpetrated this royal interest in Grail mythology, for the image of King Arthur on the Winchester Round Table is actually an image of Henry.

These were the last decades of a fading age of chivalry, an age in which

these Grail legends loomed large and real. This was an age in which Henry VIII could take his whole court to Balingham near Calais in northern France, to meet and seal a peace treaty with Francis I of France. This was the magnificent conference that became known as the 'Field of the Cloth of Gold', during which the two kings tried to outdo each other with the splendour of their tents and the lavishness of their hospitality. The name of the meeting comes from the amount of gold thread used in the tents and the fine costumes of the royals and their courtiers, which demonstrates the vastness of the wealth on display. Here, the two kings and their courtiers could indulge in jousting and games and recreate the chivalrous ethos that winds its way through the Grail legends. Here was King Henry

emulating King Arthur, with the royal champion playing the role of Lancelot or Galahad.

But who was the legendary King Arthur? Unfortunately, just like all the biblical heroes we have looked at, the famous Arthur is also missing from the historical record. We must be very careless with our history! A small pamphlet I picked up in Glastonbury sums up the situation nicely:

King Arthur's life is a tantalizing puzzle. Nothing points conclusively to his reign in the fifth and sixth centuries; there are no eyewitness accounts of his coronation, no unarguable manuscripts detailing his deeds, no buildings with 'Arthur was here' etched into the stone. In short, there is no proof.¹

In short, another famous king has gone missing from the historical record, just like all the others. So perhaps, as with our previous research into the gospel

accounts, we might be looking in the wrong location or even in the wrong era. Perhaps Arthur was not a Dark Ages hero from Wales or Cornwall, but someone rather famous from an earlier generation and a far-flung land. But this begs the question of how such a remote character could enter the popular literature and perceptions of Medieval Celto-Anglo-Saxon Britons.

We might begin this process by looking at another central character of these Grail Romance legends who also hailed from a far-flung land, a character who has largely taken a backstage position: Joseph of Arimathaea. But Joseph was not just a hero of Grail legends, he was also central to the New Testament accounts, as it was he who took down (or saved) King Jesus-Izas from the cross. So who was this mysterious Joseph of

Arimathaea, who comes striding into the biblical story at the very end of the narrative like a conquering hero, just as King Richard I (*aka* Sean Connery) is portrayed in the tale of Robin Hood? Who was this silent, secretive and yet highly influential hero of Christianity?

In previous chapters it has already been demonstrated that Josephus Flavius, the historian, wrote a very similar story about the crucifixion of three of his former acquaintances, one of whom survived. This not only allowed the identification of the true location of the biblical crucifixion scene, in the deep ravine of the Kidron Valley, it also demonstrated the distinct possibility that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was actually Saul-Josephus Flavius. Yet this controversial identification is more than interesting, not simply

because it links Saul-Josephus (St Paul) with the crucifixion event, and the intriguing likelihood that King Jesus-Izas survived the cross in a much later era than traditionally assumed (AD 70), but also because we have Grail legends that record a subsequent history and life-story for Joseph(us) of Arimathaea.

Therefore, if this link between Joseph(us) of Arimathaea and Saul-Josephus is true, then it may well be possible to trace additional aspects of the life and times of Saul-Josephus after the fall of Jerusalem. We already know that Saul-Josephus relocated to the university at Jabneh and an apartment in Rome, and that he wrote numerous books, including *The Jewish War*, *Antiquities*, *Life* and *Against Apion*, plus the Talmud, the Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles, but

what else did he do at this time? Who, for instance, were his friends and acquaintances, and did this great traveller and adventurer continue his evangelical expeditions in his later years? Did he, for instance, take Simple Judaism to northern Europe too, in the guise of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea?

The only trouble with this new quest for the later biography of Saul-Josephus is that an association with Joseph(us) of Arimathaea may not be of as much assistance as one might hope. The original texts that detail the life and times of King Arthur come from the end of the Dark Ages, with ancient scrolls like the *Historia Brittonum* by Nenius and the *Annales Cambriae* of diverse authorship, both of which are Celtic-Welsh histories that date from the ninth and tenth

centuries respectively. But these are not Grail legends as we know them, they are simply general histories of Britain that contain a couple of references to a semi-mythological warrior king called Arthur, who may or may not have lived in the sixth century AD. These stories have none of the components that we are familiar with, such as Gawain, Lancelot, the Round Table, the magical sword of Excalibur (Caliburn) or the Lady of the Lake, they are simply tales of battles fought and won or lost. The apparent fantasy stories of the Grail legends that were woven around King Arthur were the 'invention' of Norman scribes working in the period between the start of the Crusades and the dissolution of the Knights Templar in AD 1307. There is a distinct possibility, therefore, that this later Grail legend material was

greatly influenced by legends and histories that were discovered in the Middle East by the Templars.

These Grail myths were not the work of one man, of course, but one of the first to apply his hand was Geoffrey of Monmouth, who wrote *The Prophecies of Merlin* in the 1130s, and thereby created the legendary wizard almost single-handedly. At about the same time, William of Malmesbury wrote *The Antiquities of Glastonbury*, which details the coming of Joseph of Arimathaea to England. Most of the later thirteenth century Grail legends came from Normandy in northern France, the land of the new chivalrous culture that so heavily influenced Grail literature. However, contrary to common perceptions, Normandy was not the land of the Gauls but the land of the Norse-men, the Vikings, and so

many interesting Norse legends would also have been available to the royal bards and troubadours of these Scandio-Gaulish courts. The Norman aristocracy's primary ancestor was Rollo, the Scottish Viking who effectively became king of Normandy in AD 991 at Saint-Clair-sur-Epte, the original homelands of the Scottish Sinclair clan. It was also from Rollo that the family of William the Conqueror sprang, which is why the subsequent kings and queens of England invariably had the ginger-red hair that is so typical of the Scandinavian phenotype. Normandy was also one of the primary centers for the Crusaders and Templars, and it was during this Crusading era that Chretien de Troyes and Robert de Boron formulated the more complex Grail legends that we are familiar with.

Within the earlier of these Grail legend traditions, William of Malmesbury asserts that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea did come to England, but it is uncertain where this tradition sprang from. We know that apostles or missionaries came to Britain in a very early era, for Eusebius tells us so:

... and some (apostles) have crossed the Ocean and reached the Isles of Britain, all this I for my part will not admit to be the work of mere men, far less of poor and ignorant men, certainly not of deceivers and wizards.²

Eusebius is indicating that contemporary disciples of King Jesus went to Britain, presumably in the latter years of the first century AD. Who they were, he does not say. Tertullian and Hippolytus likewise say that apostles arrived in England in an early era, but again do not say who exactly they were. The first detailed reference

to this voyage is apparently in the ninth century *Life of Mary Magdalene* penned by Bishop Rabanus Maurus, and so some eight hundred years elapse before we have the first signs of a confirmation of this story, and no doubt William of Malmesbury used some of this source material in his twelfth century manuscript. However, this does not necessarily mean that the familiar elements of the later Grail legends have been made up, for much of it contains a striking similarity to Bishop Irenaeus' *Against Heresies*, and so the Grail legends, including the vast Norman *Vulgate Cycle*, may simply represent the recording of heretical knowledge into the format of popular mythical stories and romances that the Church could not ban or claim were blasphemous.

The Norman Grail stories

include *Perceval* by Chretien de Troyes (c. AD 1185) and *Joseph of Arimathaea, Merlin and Perceval* by Robert de Boron (c. AD 1200). The later stories that comprise the *Vulgate Cycle* (c. AD 1220) include *The History of the Holy Grail*, *Lancelot*, *Quest for the Holy Grail*, *The Death of Arthur* and *The Story of Merlin*. These are largely tedious, turgid stories that are decidedly soporific and defy easy analysis. In the words of the translators and literati who have worked on these legends, the Arthurian *Vulgate Cycle*:

... is a literary dungheap in which one might locate a few textual diamonds. Albert Pauphilet, 1918.

... is one of the most disjointed European literary works ever written. J Bruce, 1923.

... has a highly repetitive narrative structure that creates a monotony bordering on the

offensive.

Ferdinand Lot, 1954.

... lacks focus, rambles, gives you a headache and puts you to sleep. Jane Burns 1993.³

It would seem that the analysis of these legends is going to be far from easy. But if there was any rationale for these Grail legends being so obtuse, perhaps it is encapsulated in the first of these comments. Perhaps only the initiated few, 'with ears to hear', would be able to locate the occasional 'textual diamond'. If you want to hide a needle, then place it in the middle of a haystack.

Because of this, most of these stories initially seem to lie on the fringes of fringe mythology, and so it would appear unlikely that we can generate any reliable information from these sources. But this is not unlike the situation we have already witnessed in

the biblical texts, which also include bizarre stories, impossible ‘miracles’ and characters that cannot be found in the historical record. So if we can decipher many aspects of the biblical texts we can certainly make headway with the Grail myths – especially as the *History of the Holy Grail* claims that Jesus was its author!

Mount Moriah & Ynis Wytrin

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea did come to Britain, and that there are elements of history within the Grail mythology; if we re-read and review these many and varied texts, what may we find there? Perhaps the first point of access is the story that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea travelled to Glastonbury in southwest England.

William of Malmesbury, who wrote a history of Joseph(us) at Glastonbury called *The Antiquities of Glastonbury*, said that:

The king of Dammonia ... was ... a Briton. This may be presumed because he called Glastonbury 'Ynis Wytrin', which is known to be a British name.⁴

Ynis Wytrin was a Celto-Latin name, those being the two primary languages in use at this time in southwest of Britain, while the later name of 'Glastonbury' was probably an Anglo-Saxon equivalent. The Celtic *ynys* means 'isle', while the Latin *vitrum* means 'glass', which was itself derived from *videre* or *visere* meaning 'see'. The Welsh have taken this Latin word and created from it the Celto-Welsh word *wyddryn* (*gwyddryn*) which also means glass. Subsequently,

in the later Saxon era of the Dark Ages, this name was again translated into the equivalent High German, but in doing so they rather concentrated upon the meaning of *vitrum* that refers to 'glass' rather than to 'see'. The end result of this process was the equivalent name Glas Bury meaning 'Glass Fortress', and so the adjoining village became Glass Ton Bury (Glastonbury) meaning 'Town near the Glass Fortress'.

The result of these translations means it is likely that Ynis Wytrin (Ynis Gwyddryn or Ynys Vitrin) originally meant 'Isle of Glass' or even 'Isle to See', whatever that may mean. The reference here to an isle is generally regarded to be a reference to the Glastonbury Tor, for it was once an isle surrounded by marshlands, and so the name may have also inferred the 'Hill of Glass' or 'Hill to See'.

But where did such a name come from, and what exactly did it mean? The most probable answer is that it came from Jerusalem and from the Temple Mount. The Temple Mount was called Mount Moriah **הר מֹרְיָא** and the root of the word for Moriah is *raha* **רָאָה** meaning ‘vision’ or ‘see’. So Mount Moriah actually means ‘Mount to See (god)’, for this was the site where Abraham had a vision of god. Strange as it may initially seem, the Glastonbury Tor may have been a Celtic representation of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. However, if this was the location in which the Church of Simple Judaism was establishing its first presence in England, this synergy between Jerusalem and Glastonbury should not be so surprising.

Strangely enough, there is one other oddity that can be derived from

these translations, and that is that Mount Moriah, when translated into the Greek, can become *rama* ραμα meaning 'hill' and *thea* θια meaning 'see' (as in a theatre, where one 'sees' a show). Thus the 'Hill to See' (Mount Moriah) can actually be pronounced as Rama-Thea: a translation that is partly given to us in the *Thayer Greek Lexicon*, which similarly suggests that 'Arimathaea' refers to a mount or hill. Thus the original name for Glastonbury, Ynys Vitrin, can be translated as Mount Moriah (Temple of Jerusalem) in the Hebrew, and Arimathaea (the title for Saul-Josephus) in the Greek.

Remember that there is precious little evidence for a town called Arimathaea in Judaea, which is the usual explanation for Joseph(us)' title. The town first appears in Eusebius'

Onomasticon, but the date of this appearance is suspiciously close to the pilgrimage to Judaea of Empress Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, in AD 327. Helena was determined to find all the holy relics and New Testament locations and it would not have been very prudent to say, 'We don't know where this town is, Maam'. What Eusebius has done here is to adopt a standard Talmudic technique and rummage around the Old Testament looking for a town with a similar name, and discovered Armathaim-Zophim, near Lydda (Diopolis). However, while this was the first ever identification of the town of Arimathaea it is not the one used in the modern Concordance, which has moved the town to Neby Samwil, a suburb of Jerusalem. This is why I think that Arimathaea refers to the

Temple Mount in Jerusalem, rather than a town, for this is the title that Saul-Josephus adopted after the fall of Jerusalem and it was subsequently used as a name for the Glastonbury Tor.

A subtle link between Saul-Josephus and the Temple Mount at Jerusalem might seem incongruous, because Josephus never claimed to be the high priest of Jerusalem. However, we have already seen evidence in previous chapters that indicated that Saul-Josephus was actually Johanan ben Zakkai, the Jewish priest who came from 'nowhere' to become *de facto* high priest of Jerusalem after the destruction of the city in AD 70. It was Johanan-Saul-Josephus who moved the Temple and all of its political and administrative functions to Jabneh, near Tel Aviv. If this is so, then a

hypocorism like Arimathaea (Mount Moriah) for Saul-Josephus would be highly appropriate.*¹

Staff of Joseph(us)

Jerusalem had fallen, and the Jews – be they Pharisee, Sadducee, or followers of the Galilean Sect – were scattered across the empire. A few of them made their way to the far corners of the empire, and some even made the arduous journey to England. Some would have chosen a place of exile and made their way ‘voluntarily’, while others were forced into exile and imprisonment at the point of a Roman *gladius*, as we shall see in the next chapter. William of Malmesbury says of some of these dramatic events:

Whilst the storm of persecution was raging,

the scattered believers penetrated into diverse kingdoms of the Earth ... Therefore St Philip ... chose twelve from among (his) disciples and sent them to Britain to preach the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Their leader, it is said, was Philip's dear friend, Joseph of Arimathaea, who buried the lord (Jesus).⁵

That 'storm of persecution' just has to be the forced exile of hundreds of thousands of Jews after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, rather than the relative calm of AD 33, and so again we see an oblique reference here to a much later era for the crucifixion. It would appear that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was on a missionary tour to England, but this is again reminiscent of our historian friend, Saul-Josephus, who had likewise been on many a tour in and around the eastern Mediterranean.

Upon landing in England and being granted lands near Glastonbury

by King Arivargus – the famous twelve hides of Glastonbury – Joseph(us) of Arimathaea is said to have plunged his staff into the ground, whereupon it started to flower. This is the ‘miraculous’ Hawthorn tree of Glastonbury, that is said to flower in December. Again, there have been many interpretations of this event, but it is my assertion that the root (*sic*) of this mythology is to be found in Josephus’ *Antiquities*. There, Josephus mentions that all of the tribes of Israel carried rods or staffs, and that these were used by Moses to decide which of the twelve tribes should become the Israelite priesthood:

Moses ... desired the heads of the tribes to bring their rods, with the names of their tribes inscribed upon them ... On the next day he brought out the rods ... but they also saw buds and branches grown out of Aaron’s rod, with ripe fruits upon them; they were

almonds, the rod having been cut out of that tree. The people were so amazed at this strange sight, that they ... permitted Aaron to enjoy the priesthood peaceably.^{J6}

Moses performed this small trick with the sprouting rod in order to prove that Aaron, his brother, should become the head of the priesthood. This ruse appears to have worked, even though the descendants of Benjamin and Joseph should perhaps have been the legitimate priest-kings of all Israel, rather than the Levites, as the former were the descendants of Jacob's chief wife, Rachel. Therefore, by performing the same trick, Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was probably demonstrating that his descendants should now become the new Simple Judaic priesthood. If Joseph of Arimathaea was Saul-Josephus, as I maintain, then this is exactly what the

latter would have done. Saul-Josephus most certainly craved the position of priest-king, and in this remote outpost of the empire he could certainly have achieved just that.

Timothy

Another interesting aspect of this line of investigation is the quote in the second epistle of Saul to Timothy. At the end of this letter Saul (Josephus) invites Timothy come and see him, and gives the greetings of those who are with him. These include the previously unmentioned characters Eubulus, Pudens, Linus and Claudia.

Do thy diligence to come before winter.
Eubulus greets thee, and Pudens, and Linus,
and Claudia, and all the brethren.[B7](#)

Who are these previously unmentioned

characters, and are they in any way important in this investigation? In actual fact, the Pudens and Claudia mentioned here are highly likely to have been Rufus Aulus Pudens Pudentius and his wife Claudia Rufina, whose marriage was mentioned by the Roman poet Martial (Aulus may be a misspelling of Rufus). Pudens was either an army commander or a senator in the late first century AD, while Claudia was a princess of British descent who lived in Rome in the 50s and 60s AD. Considering that Pudens is said to have had large estates in Umbria and some 400 servants, a senatorial position is entirely probable, which again means that the early Church of Simple Judaism included some very influential characters in Roman society, as we have seen previously. The nationality

of this Claudia is quite certain, as Martial says of her:

Seeing Claudia Rufina has sprung from the blue Britons, how come she has the feeling of a Latin maid? Thanks to the gods, she has borne many children to her holy husband.⁸

Although Claudia was a common name in Rome at the time, this quote identifies Claudia Rufina as being British, which narrows her identification down a great deal. The quote then goes on to say that her husband, Pudens, was 'holy'. Now this was not exactly a common thing to say of a Roman senator and it has led to great speculation that he was a member of Saul-Josephus' Simple Judaism. Since it seems likely that Saul-Josephus was sending the salutations of this same Pudens to Timothy, this is highly likely.

The odd reference to the colour blue may also be central to this investigation. Rather than being about the ‘blue blood’ of British royalty, this is supposed to be a reference to the Britons wearing blue woad on their skins. However, it is highly probable that none these explanations is true and instead this casual comment from Martial probably gives us our first link between these characters and Glastonbury. The Welsh word for blue is actually *glas*,^{*2} and thus there is great scope for a confusion here, deliberate or otherwise, between *glas* meaning ‘glass’ (from the Latin *glacies* meaning ‘ice’), and *glas* meaning ‘blue’. So the comment about the heritage of Claudia, made by Martial, may have meant that she has ‘sprung from the Glastonbury Britons’.

A link between Claudia and

Glastonbury may appear to be impossible in this era, because under this new chronology it is highly unlikely that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea (Saul-Josephus) went to England before AD 70. However, it should be borne in mind that Tacitus did not write his *Annals* until about AD 115, and so he could easily be using contemporary appellations for earlier eras. In other words, Tacitus simply knew Claudia as Claudia of Glastonbury and therefore used that name, even though she was known in her youth as Gladys and the 'Glastonbury' title did not come into being until much later in her life.

This suggestion of a link to Glastonbury is further supported by the supposed parentage of Claudia. According to Cassius Dio she was the daughter of Caradoc the king of the Catuvellauni, who inhabited the

southeast of England from their capital city at Camulodunum (Colchester), which is a suitably Arthurian name. It was Caradoc who led the resistance to the Roman invasion of Britain in AD 43 under Emperor Claudius. After his initial defeat at the hands of Plautius, the commander of the Roman invasion forces, Caradoc retreated to the river Severn, where he became the king of the Silurians and continued the struggle against the Romans. In Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* King Caradoc would appear to have been one and the same as King Arivargus, the king who gave the twelve hides of Glastonbury to Joseph(us) of Arimathaea.

It is said locally that Caradoc made his last stand near Church Stretton in Shropshire, on Caradoc Hill. He was defeated, escaped,

betrayed and was finally captured by the Romans in about AD 52, and sent to Rome as a prisoner. At some point during the last years of the reign of Emperor Claudius, King Caradoc was brought before the Roman Senate, with his daughter Gladys, where it is reported that he gave a stirring speech about the ideals of fighting for one's freedom, and the power of Rome in defeating him. Impressed by his regal bearing and the fortitude of his daughter, Caradoc was released; but he was still required to spend seven years in Rome under probation, in order to ensure that the 'barbarian' was fully Romanised. During this time Caradoc Romanised his name to Caratacus, while Gladys took on the name of the emperor and became known as Claudia. Although a barbarian, she was still of royal blood, and it was this

regal status that allowed her to marry Pudens, who was a Roman senator, as we have seen.⁹

If this Caratacus' appearance at the senate happened late in the reign of Claudius, say in AD 53, then Caratacus would still have been in Rome in AD 60 and perhaps a few years beyond that. In the chronology of Saul-Josephus that has been forged in this book, it would appear that Saul-Josephus was shipwrecked and arrived in Rome in early AD 63, where he became influential enough to become closely acquainted with Poppaea, the wife of Emperor Nero. It is not surprising, therefore, that Saul-Josephus should also have met Claudia and attempted to convert her to his new creed of Simple Judaism; just as he attempted, and possibly succeeded, with Berenice and Poppaea.

The *Roman Martyrologies*, a compendium of works by Pope Gregory I and other Church Fathers, suggests that this is exactly what happened, for they indicate that Saul-Josephus resided at Pudens and Claudia's house in Rome and that her children were brought up 'at his feet' (at Saul-Josephus' feet). Here again we see the possibility that Saul-Josephus was a charismatic individual, especially when socialising with influential ladies, suggesting that he may well have had a handsome physique and a charming wit.

Thus it would appear that the Pudens and Claudia who were mentioned in Saul's Epistle to Timothy were rather influential people. Here we have a Roman senator and his royal British wife, who were so closely aligned with Simple Judaism that they

allowed their children to be tutored by Saul-Josephus, which demonstrates the level of support and financing that Simple Judaism may have had at its disposal in the AD 60s – the era in which Saul-Josephus was supposed to have been under house arrest in Rome. Here we also see a compelling reason for Saul-Josephus making the long and arduous journey to England in the late first century AD. He may well have had a comfortable life in Judaea and Rome, being a university dean, high priest and *de facto* governor of Judaea, but there was a whole new nation of potential converts to Simple Judaism in the far northwest. Had he garnered the full support of a British princess, this would certainly be a good platform from which to start a new evangelical mission, because he could potentially capture the entire royal court and

aristocracy to his new creed in one easy move. It was too good an opportunity to miss.

Finally, we come to the last of the characters mentioned in the verse from Saul's Epistle to Timothy, and his name is Linus. It is this final name that links up all the others and demonstrates that Saul-Josephus was indeed speaking about this influential Romo-British family and not some other individuals of the same name. This Linus was most definitely Linus, the second bishop of Rome (pope), and he is said to have been the son of Claudia Rufina, the wife of Pudens Pudentius who we have just mentioned. The Catholic Encyclopaedia says of this Linus:

The Linus mentioned in the text (the Epistle to Timothy) is identified by Bishop Irenaeus as the successor to St Peter as Bishop of Rome;

and in the *Apostolical Constitutions* he is said to have been the son of Claudia, *Linus ho Klaudias*, which seems to imply that Claudia was at least as well known as Linus.¹⁰

So Linus, the second pope of Simple Judaism, was the son of Claudia Rufina, the daughter of Caratacus. This information comes from some of the early Church fathers, and the accounts of Bishop Irenaeus of Lyon actually says:

The blessed apostles, then, having founded and built up the Church, committed into the hands of Linus the office of the episcopate. Of this Linus, Saul makes mention in the Epistles to Timothy.¹²

Irenaeus was not alone in his assertion, for Jerome, Eusebius, John Chrysostom, the *Liberian Catalogue* and the *Liber Pontificalis* all say much the same thing. These quotations and

others besides suggest that the very children who were said to have been at the feet of Saul-Josephus, while he resided at Claudia and Pudens' house in Rome during the AD 60s, included the young Linus, who went on to become one of the first popes of the new Church of Simple Judaism (Christianity).

A central test to the new chronology that has been generated in this book would therefore be the date of Linus' episcopate (rule as pope), for if it came before Saul-Josephus' visit to Rome, my new chronology would be severely strained to say the least. Unfortunately, we have no reliable date for Linus' episcopate, as the Church records cannot even decide the order of the founding popes of Simple Judaism, let alone the dates of their rule. The *Apostolic Constitutions*

indicate that Linus was the first bishop of Rome (or pope), installed by Saul-Josephus himself. But that rather diminishes the role of St Peter, and so classical Church doctrine demotes Linus to the second pope, and indicates that Peter reigned from AD 30 - 67. However, Tertullian places St Clement after St Peter, which would further demote Linus to being number three in line.

What may have happened here is that my new chronology is the true chronology of the early Church, and Saul-Josephus was its primary leader and evangelist. In which case, the first bishop of Rome (or pope) could not have been installed until at least AD 63, when Saul-Josephus first visited Rome. This left a great span of time between the AD 30s and AD 63 without a pope, and yet classical Church

chronology demanded that a pope must have been in office during this era. Accordingly, the clergy demanded that this void should be filled by St Peter and St Clement although there is no mention of either being in Rome in this early era. As we shall see later, if there was a rumour of an earlier pope, and Linus was only the second pope of Simple Judaism, then it is highly likely that the first 'pope' was actually Saul-Josephus himself. However, it is unlikely that the later Catholic clergy would have appreciated Saul-Josephus as being the first pope and so they demoted him, just as they managed to sideline his position as the originator and creator of Simple Judaism.

Not surprisingly, given this argument and uncertainty, the dates given for Linus' episcopate vary tremendously. The *Liberian Catalogue*

and the *Liber Pontificalis* both date his reign to AD 56-67, but Jerome dates it to 67-78 and Eusebius dates the end of his reign to the second year of the reign of Titus, or AD 80. With such a wide spread of dates, the reign of Linus can neither confirm nor refute the new chronology, but perhaps it is worth demonstrating that the dates given by Jerome are completely feasible under this new chronology for early Simple Judaism (Christianity).

Princess Claudia arrived in Rome in AD 52. If she had been promptly courted by Rufus Pudens Pudentius and married within two years, her first son could have been born in AD 55. This would mean that Linus would have been only twelve when he became pope. While Pope Benedict IX may have been as young as eleven when he became bishop of

Rome, perhaps an age of twelve is still rather unlikely.

The answer to this conundrum is to be found in Claudia herself, for what was she doing in Rome in the first place? Did she really need to be there to support her father, Caratacus? The answer probably lies in the fact that Rufus Pudens had been a legionnaire commanding the Roman army sent to England, and so he may well have taken Claudia as a captive wife as early as AD 43, after Caratacus was defeated at the Battle of Medway. That such wives were taken from a defeated enemy is evident by the similar booty-wife who was given to Saul-Josephus Flavius by Titus, after the fall of Jerusalem. This may be another reason for Caratacus' life being spared by the Roman senate, for a powerful Roman senator had already married the Celtic

king's daughter and she may already have borne him a son. Would Senator Pudens have willingly consented to the execution of his father-in-law, and borne the condemnation of his new wife and the resulting strife in his household? I think not. Rather, it is highly likely that he would have made a stirring speech in favour of clemency.

If Claudia was a royal booty-wife fit for a senatorial commander of the Roman army, then Claudia could have had her first child as early as, say, AD 48. In this scenario, Linus would still have been a child when Saul first met him in AD 63, but also a respectable adult of eighteen when he became the second bishop of Rome, the second pope of Simple Judaism, in about AD 66. This is a likely date for Linus' elevation to pope, because Saul-Josephus probably considered himself

to be the 'Bishop of Rome' while he was there, but he made his swift exit from Rome in AD 66 and so the position would have become vacant at this time. The logical action of Saul-Josephus, before making his swift exit, would have been to elevate his gifted young student, Linus, into becoming the second bishop of Rome. Surprisingly, AD 66 is the exact date given for the start of Linus' reign in the Catholic Encyclopaedia. Linus would have reigned until Cletus became pope in about AD 80, and he was succeeded by Clement of Rome in about AD 91.

However, the title of 'pope' for Linus is a little anachronistic and grand, as there would only have been a few dozen adherents to the creed of Simple Judaism in Rome at this time. Saul-Josephus had already left Rome to become commander of Galilee, and

Linus would simply have been the leader of the small band of stalwarts who were left in Rome. He probably entertained a few dozen like-minded compatriots in prayer and collected a few shekels for Saul-Josephus, nothing more. Having said that, it is rumoured that Linus used the family home as Rome's first basilica, and this was said to be a mansion of some luxury. In which case, the congregation may have included some wealthy neighbours and a number of servants. It is also suggested that this house had originally been the British embassy in Rome, owned by Caratacus himself, during the period of English independence from Rome; thus Claudia had once been as wealthy as her Roman husband, just as one might expect for a princess of an influential nation. The site of this house is now occupied by

the basilica of Santa Pudenziana.

Perhaps a summary of these last few pages is required at this point. Saul-Josephus, in his letter to Timothy, mentions friends of his called Claudia, Pudens and Linus; who can all be traced back to one particular family who lived in Rome. But the maternal side of this family had substantial English roots, with the wife being of the royal family of Caratacus. These same characters also appear to have had strong links with the early Church of Simple Judaism and to Saul-Josephus himself, there being strong rumours from the early Church fathers indicating that Saul-Josephus lodged at their mansion and converted them all to his new creed. Likewise, there appear to be definite links between this royal family and Glastonbury, with Caratacus being based in and around

the Severn estuary for nearly ten years, and with Claudia being called the Glas-Briton (Blue-Briton).

Vulgate Cycle

A huge amount of Grail literature was produced in the early Middle Ages, and a large number of these legends are bound together into a collection of six stories about King Arthur and the Grail known as the *Vulgate Cycle*, as we have seen. The credited authors within these texts are Walter Map and Walter Kayo, but these are likely to be pseudonyms of some kind. More likely authors include Chretien de Troyes, Godefroi de Leigni and Robert de Boron.¹³ However, little is known of the life and times of these French poets and historians, apart from the rough era in which they worked and a few of

their manuscripts.

The first book of the *Vulgate Cycle* is called *The History of the Holy Grail* and its content is very interesting, for it attempts to relate the history of the Holy Grail. The vast bulk of the *Vulgate Cycle* is undoubtedly a fictional romance about the gallant deeds of chivalrous knights in shining armour, which goes on and on in an endless and soporific fashion. However, *History* is rather different, for it also contains a great deal of historical material that appears to be simultaneously true and highly contentious. *History* is said to be a later work in the *Vulgate Cycle*, but from its attention to historical detail and its lack of Grail questing it does appear to be the original of the many volumes that comprise this great epic. The fact that William of Malmesbury,

who wrote his *Antiquities of Glastonbury* in the early twelfth century, was quoting extensively from a very similar text to *History*, rather than the other volumes of the *Vulgate*, also points towards this conclusion.

The History of the Holy Grail explains that King Jesus himself gave the author of *History* a small book describing his lineage and an account of the Grail. The Grail was said to be the cup that collected the blood of Jesus when he was on the cross; so the Grail is closely associated in some manner with a lineage and also with blood. The clear implication is that the Grail is intimately related to a (royal) bloodline; and it was, through Mary Magdalene.

Note also that Robert de Boron did not claim to be the original author of this history of the Grail romances

but gave that role to Jesus himself. Now such an accreditation is usually taken with a whole sackful of salt: a literary allusion designed to give the text more authority. In addition, the very notion that Jesus could have authored any such account, and that this text may have been preserved for more than a millennium, is simply absurd. Except, of course, for the fact that the primary historian that I am using as a reference source is one Saul-Josephus, who happened to live in exactly the same era as the biblical Jesus and whose manuscripts did indeed survive for two millennia. So would it be so impossible for a manuscript penned by Jesus to have survived for over a thousand years, and for it to have been copied into a medieval romance? In fact, we have a description of this very book from Photius, and he said that it

was called *The Chronology of the Kings of Judah*, by (Jesus) Justus of Tiberias, and it did indeed describe Jesus' lineage. This was the history that King Jesus authored, and which may have been the inspiration for *History of the Holy Grail*.

The possibility that the Grail romances may have relied on a much earlier text can not only be glimpsed by the interesting information that they provide, as will be shown shortly, but also in the very style in which they are written. While the *Vulgate Cycle* is considered to be entirely mythical, there are sections of *History* that are entirely lucid, accurately historical and highly detailed. In fact, if one did not know where these particular paragraphs and chapters came from, it would be very easy to confuse them with the detailed accounts of Saul-

Josephus, as represented by his *Jewish War* or *Life*. So let us take a look at some of the similarities between the Grail legends of the *Vulgate Cycle* and earlier works that have sprung out of first century Judaea.

For example, in a later section of the *History of the Holy Grail* there is a long discussion between King Evalach and Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, which has the same resonance and intent as Irenaeus' *Against Heresies* or even the *Clementine Recognitions*. Again, the discussion purports to explain Christian beliefs through dialectic discussion, just as *Recognitions* did with the great debate between Simon Magus and St Peter, but to the rational reader it merely succeeds in creating yet more holes in the fabric of the Christian creed. One of the discussions questioned how

Joseph (husband of Mary) could be Jesus' father if he did not have carnal relations with Mary, his wife? And if Joseph was not Jesus' father, then how could Jesus be descended from King David? These are arguments that I had formerly presumed had only surfaced during the Enlightenment era of the eighteenth century, but here is a thirteenth century book purporting to relay the arguments of a first century debate. In frustration, King Evalach says to Joseph(us) of Arimathaea:

You tell me things that neither you nor anyone else can prove, nor do they seem in any way reasonable. You say that Jesus was not conceived in the woman who gave birth to him, and that she was a virgin and her virginity was never harmed. Next you say that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are only one god, and yet each of the three can be god by itself ... You maintain what you want, but you tell me nothing that can be true.¹⁴

In fact, King Evalach sounds like an incarnation of Procurator Festus, the governor of Judaea who Saul-Josephus was hauled before during his seven-year imprisonment (indeed, King Agrippa had much the same reaction to Saul-Josephus' proselytizing). Here, Festus says:

Festus said with a loud voice, 'Saul, you are raving mad; your great learning is driving you mad.'^{B15}

In fact, since the dialogue in *History* occasionally flits between England and Judaea, this may be exactly what this account is – a complete rewrite of the Acts of the Apostles and Saul-Josephus' *Life* that is set in a northern European setting for a northern European audience. However, this is not Saul-Josephus himself writing *History*, for these chapters are hardly

complimentary to Simple Judaism.

According to the story, King Evalach is eventually placated and converted to Simple Judaism, just as we might expect, but as far as the creed of Simple Judaism is concerned the damage has already been done. The unsayable heresies that challenge Church doctrine have already been said and the reader has been set upon a path of query and doubt, and it is entirely possible this was the intent and the appeal of these texts. The *Clementine Recognitions* and the Gospel of Barnabas (which is also slightly 'heretical') do much the same, which is why the Church banned them.

Another of these otherwise unsayable heresies comes from the *High Book of the Grail (Perlesvaus)*, which says:

Sire, said Sir Gawain, I wish to ask you about a king I saw who took his dead son and had him boiled and cooked, and then gave him to all the people of his land to eat ... wishing them to share his belief.¹⁶

Ouch! This is clearly a graphic parody of the bloody horrors of the Christian Eucharist, where the flesh of Jesus is cut up by the priest to be eaten by the congregation – a macabre ritual that turns the sacred altar into a cross between a butcher's table and a mortuary slab.

While a Protestant Christian may point out that the eating of King Jesus' body is only symbolic, the Catholic service dictates that the worshippers are eating Jesus' real flesh and blood. This transmutation into real flesh and blood is achieved through the doctrine of transubstantiation, but I was unable to discover from Catholic sources if Jesus' body had been cooked or not.

Cooked would taste much better, in my opinion; and no doubt the aristocracy would get the rump and sirloin (medium rare), while the peasants get the trotters and brisket (well boiled). The Catholic Eucharist is pure cannibalism, a barbaric Neolithic rite that should have no part in a modern society.

Again, we can see that the Grail romance's criticism of the orthodox Church is positively devastating and quite bold, for an era in which such criticisms could result in a slow-roasting over hot coals, and yet the satire was obviously sufficiently oblique to prevent any such persecution. Thus, *Against Heresies*, the *Clementine Recognitions* and the *Vulgate Cycle* were all subversive to the Catholic creed, but not so obviously heretical that you could be

burned at the stake for possessing a copy.

Also of interest is the early date of *Recognitions* and *Against Heresies*. Irenaeus was the second century Bishop of Lyon, while Clement was a first century Bishop of Rome, and even if Clement did not pen the *Recognitions* himself, it was still a very early Christian work. If the *History of the Grail* contains the same style of work, this indicates that its authors were in possession of some very early reference material. Two other documents that the Grail authors must have had as reference works are Saul-Josephus' *Antiquities* and *Jewish War*, as we shall see shortly. These were reasonably common texts in this era and copies were most certainly used by Walter Bower who devised *Scotichronicon*, the ancient history of

the Scots, in the fourteenth century. See the book *Scota* for further details.

Joseph - Josephus

The author of *History* is said to be Walter of Kayo, but this is thought to be a playful hypocorison of some nature. In classical tradition the author is thought to have been Robert de Boron, but in the text the author actually refuses to reveal his true name, and he gives many reasons for this reticence. Firstly, he indicates that some readers may see this as boastfulness. Secondly, he says that he is ‘the most despised person ever created’, and if people knew that he was the author they would never believe him. Thirdly, he claims that he does not want any errors to be ascribed to himself. Finally, he

explains that no matter how much he covers up his name, 'it will be better known than he would like'. He then says that he was the most sinful of sinners who had a vision of a bright light – yet another flash of inspiration – during which his sight was lost and a certain man (Jesus) spoke to him and commanded him to become an author.

A significant number of these declarations are remarkably similar to the protestations and explanations made by Saul-Josephus, especially the remarkably honest admission that he was 'the most despised person ever created' and a 'sinner'. This, together with the confessions to boastfulness and lying, is typical of Saul-Josephus' open admission of duplicity, deceitfulness, hypocrisy, boasting, lying and all the many other great fractures and faults in his personality.

History says of its author:

717 years after the passion of Jesus Christ it happened that I, the most sinful of sinners, was lying in a small hut ... when I awoke and saw around me such brightness ... and a man standing in front of me so handsome that his beauty could not be describes by any mortal man ... he said 'be not afraid'.^{B17}

In a remarkably similar fashion, Saul (Josephus) says in Acts of the Apostles and his many epistles:

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I (Saul) am chief (sinner).^{B18}

And it came to pass, that, as I (Saul) made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?^{B19}

It would seem likely that large chunks of *History* were extracted from the works of Saul-Josephus, a despised but prolific author who was similarly obsessive about dates, personalities and events, just as the author of *History* was. *History* then goes on to relate the life of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea (Saul-Josephus), who collected King Jesus' blood in a cup while he was on the cross, and was then thrown in jail by the Jews. This event, it is explained, happened during the reign of Emperor Tiberius; which it would have to do in order to tie in with the orthodox New Testament accounts, which insist that Jesus died in AD 33. However, the book then jumps 43 years in the space of one paragraph and arrives in the reign of Vespasian, where we find Joseph(us) of Arimathaea still in jail.

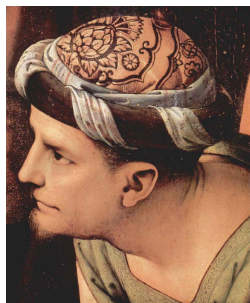
Readers who wish to explore the original *History of the Holy Grail* should note that the text addresses Vespasian as Titus, and then to add to the confusion it refers to Titus as Vespasian. This confusion has occurred because father and son confusingly possessed exactly the same names, Titus Flavius Vespasianus. Equally confusing is the fact that the ancient and modern traditions have chosen different portions of that same name to distinguish these two characters. This is unfortunate, but understandable.

What is much less understandable is that academics like Professor Joanne Rittey, one of the translators of *History*, failed to spot this reversal; and so Rittey merely comments that Robert de Boron was mistaken in thinking that Vespasian

sacked Jerusalem. No, Robert de Boron was not mistaken at all, he is just calling Titus ‘Vespasian’ and Vespasian ‘Titus’; and so his history of first century Judaea is much more reliable than Rittey evidently believes. Similarly, another mystery is how Rittey can devote a whole chapter on whether *History* was intended to be a romance or a historical work, and not a single paragraph on why Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was portrayed as being a contemporary of Emperor Vespasian. This represents a substantial 40-year jump in the narrative, and the notion of King Arthur battling with the Romans further inflames this mystery. Here we see a major chronological dislocation, of the kind that we are getting very used to in this unfolding story, and yet Professor Rittey ignores it completely.²⁰

Anyway, Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was eventually released from prison by Titus and Vespasian, and for some strange reason Joseph(us) believes that he has only been in jail for three days, not 43 years. The only logical reason for this huge discontinuity in the chronology is that Jesus was *not* crucified in AD 33, as the New Testament claims, but in AD 70. That *History* is fully aware of the date in question, is made plain by the comment that one year after Joseph(us)'s release from prison, Titus and Vespasian proceed with the attack on Jerusalem. This is quite a specific and well-known date, AD 70, a date that would have been as memorable in the thirteenth century as it is now. But this leaves the author of *History* with a huge problem for he has to account for the missing thirty-seven years in his

text between the orthodox and true dates for the crucifixion. Faced with this dilemma he has used a simple literary device of leaving Joseph(us) of Arimathaea in jail for 43 years (rather than 37), but on his release he is said to have aged only three days. Not only does Joseph(us) miss out on nearly forty years of his life, but so too does the narrative!



*Fig
14.1 Joseph
of Arimathaea,
by Pietro
Perugino*

However, I cannot believe that the text was written like this in the first place, for it makes little sense. What must have happened is that the author was copying an original text that identified

Joseph(us) of
Arimathaea and
the crucifixion event as being
concurrent with the era of Vespasian
and Titus. Knowing this to be 'wrong',
but being unable to delete Vespasian
because he is such a pivotal character
in this story, the author of *History*
simply had Josephus 'sleep' for 40-
odd years until his characters could
arrive in the correct era. His problem
was now solved, for a mythology, but
completely dislocated as a real history.
But when looking at this chronological
dislocation from a rational
perspective, it is abundantly clear that
Jesus was not crucified in AD 33.
Instead, he was crucified in the Kidron
Valley in AD 70, and that is why this
account of his crucifixion involved
Vespasian and Titus.

This re-dating of the crucifixion

to AD 70 is also the reason for the 'pieces of silver' legend in the Gospel of Matthew:

And Judas Iscariot said to them, What will you give me, and I will betray Jesus to you? And they gave him thirty pieces of silver.^{B22}

Here, the authorities are paying 30 pieces of silver for one Jew: Jesus. But this was most probably not the origin of this story; it actually came from the unidentified original text that the author of *History of the Holy Grail* was copying, for this Grail legend says that Titus sold 30 Jews for one piece of silver. The inference here is that there were so many Jewish slaves for sale, after the fall of Jerusalem, that the bottom had dropped out of the market and you could now get 30 slaves for one piece of silver.²³

It is inconceivable that Robert

de Boron did not know of the biblical '30 pieces of silver' legend, as it is one of the most famous in the New Testament, and so his strange parody of this story, with Titus selling Jews on the cheap after the fall of Jerusalem, was almost blasphemous. So why did he do it? The answer seems obvious, for it is highly likely that the New Testament story is the parody here, and not the equivalent in *History*. But if Boron was correct and Titus was indeed selling Jews at this knockdown price, then once again we see that the biblical '30 pieces of silver' story should be relocated into the era immediately after the fall of Jerusalem, and the crucifixion story with it. This is also further evidence that many of the Grail legends were highly subversive, and their authors were taking great risks in publishing them.

This particular section of the story is doubly interesting, for *History* goes on to discuss three items in succession. There is a disembodied voice that told Joseph(us) of Arimathaea not to be afraid, for Titus (a Roman) would assist him; there is his rescue from a dungeon after three days; and then the siege of Jerusalem occurs shortly afterwards. Robert de Boron in *History* says of these events:

A voice came to Joseph(us) of Arimathaea saying, ‘Fear not, but be confident, for earthly vengeance has come. This man (Titus) will avenge you physically against your enemies.

Vespasian asked, ‘Joseph, how long do you think you have been in prison?’ Joseph(us) replied, ‘My lord, I think I remained there from Friday until today, and I believe it is Sunday today.’ (three days)

The story does not say any more except that Vespasian and his son Titus besieged Jerusalem during the year following Joseph’s

liberation from prison.^{J24}

In a suspiciously similar fashion, Saul-Josephus Flavius says of his experiences in Judaea during the late 60s AD:

That night I beheld a marvellous vision ... I thought there stood by me a certain man who said, 'Cease from thy sorrows, let go all fear, for that which grieves you now will promote you to greatness. Remember that you must fight alongside the Romans'.^{J25}

The Romans searched for Josephus ... (but) he had jumped into a deep cellar ... which could not be seen from above ground ... Thus Josephus concealed himself for two days, but on the third day ... he was discovered. Whereupon Vespasian sent immediately two messengers ... and ordered them to give Josephus safe conduct, and persuade him to come out.^{J26}

Now just as Vespasian returned to Caesarea, and was getting ready to march on Jerusalem.^{J27}

Here we have an exact equivalence between the accounts of the Grail myths in the *Vulgate Cycle* and the account of Josephus' conduct during the Jewish Civil War. Both of these characters had a vision that involved fighting alongside the Romans, both were in a dungeon for three days and both of these events occurred just before the siege of Jerusalem.

In fact, even the one-year period that is mentioned, between Joseph(us) of Arimathaea's rescue from 'prison' and the start of the siege of Jerusalem, can also be shown to be correct. Saul-Josephus was captured (rescued) by Vespasian and Titus in the July of AD 67, while the start of the siege of Jerusalem occurred just as Nero died, which was in the June of AD 68. Thus in both cases a year elapsed between the two events. However, the siege of

Jerusalem was put on hold for another 18 months, due to the civil unrest in Rome, and it was not resumed until the beginning of AD 70. But it is quite correct to say that only a year passed between the capture (rescue) of Saul-Josephus from the dungeon and the abortive start to the siege of Jerusalem.

Amazing as it may seem, what all of these similarities mean is that the account of the life of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea in *History* is likely to have been lifted directly from the pages of Saul-Josephus' copious jottings. Yet this explanation is all very similar to the equivalence we saw earlier, between the account of Saul-Josephus' capture at Jotapata and the events of the biblical crucifixion. It would appear that the same story-line has been reused on several occasions.

In addition, since we have

already seen many a coincidence and correspondence between these two characters, it is again highly likely that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was indeed a pseudonym for Saul-Josephus. The links between these two characters are then further confirmed in this story by Joseph of Arimathaea's son, who is conveniently said to have been called Josephus. Strangely enough, this young son called Josephus was a precocious lad who claimed to be a great writer! The account in *History* then seems to positively state all of these personal connections and similarities between these two characters are known fact, when it says:

Joseph of Arimathaea was in Jerusalem with his wife and a son named Josephus; not the one that scripture relies upon so often as a witness, but another one who was no less lettered. It was this Josephus who brought his father's lineage across the sea to Britain,

which is now called England.²⁸

One cannot help thinking of tangled webs being woven, and the resulting deceit that the clergy can no longer evade! So let us analyse this paragraph in further detail:

Firstly, the Josephus that ‘scripture relies upon as a witness’ has to be our favourite Judaeon historian, Josephus Flavius. Yet apart from the *Testimonium Flavianum*, the bogus description of King Jesus that was added to *Antiquities* at a later date, Josephus Flavius can hardly be described as a ‘witness to scripture’. In fact, when read on a surface level Josephus seems to ignore the entire biblical narrative and all the biblical characters. So why was he described here as a ‘witness to scripture’?

The answer, once more, is that

Josephus writes copiously about Jesus of Gamala. So Josephus Flavius is indeed a 'witness to scripture', as long as it is understood that Jesus of Gamala was the biblical Jesus. In addition, Josephus Flavius also used the pseudonym of Saul (St Paul), and therefore as the author of Luke, Acts and the majority of the New Testament's epistles (letters), he was indeed a historian that 'scripture relied upon as a witness'. Once more, the Grail evidence strongly indicates that Saul was Josephus Flavius.

Secondly, Saul-Josephus Flavius was indeed married by the time that King Jesus was crucified (in AD 70). Vespasian had given Saul-Josephus a booty-wife after his capture at the siege of Jotapata, and it is therefore likely that he had a small child at this

time. *History* says that Joseph of Arimathaea's son was one-and-a-half years old at the siege of Jerusalem, an age that would equate very well with any offspring from Josephus Flavius' recent marriage. But while this age for the son is perfectly reasonable, it represents another problem for the entire chronology, and especially the orthodox chronology.

The Grail text is indicating that this infant, Josephus (the son of Joseph of Arimathaea), can be confused with Saul-Josephus Flavius, who 'scripture relies upon as a witness'. But if this child was only one-and-a-half years old in AD 70, then how on Earth can he have been confused with a 'scriptural witness' to the events of the gospels? In truth, the father and the son were one and the same person – Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was actually Josephus (the

son), and this change in the generations was simply another literary device to allow Joseph(us) of Arimathaea to be middle-aged in the late first century, rather than a frail old man in his nineties. However, not even the elder Joseph(us) Flavius (of Arimathaea) could have been a ‘witness to scripture’, unless the events of the New Testament occurred in the AD 60s and not the AD 30s. Thus, again we see that the orthodox chronology is incorrect.

Thirdly, we have the small problem that the text says that Josephus (the son of Joseph of Arimathaea) was *not* Josephus Flavius, but another one ‘no less lettered’. Does this invalidate the hypothesis that Joseph of Arimathaea was Josephus Flavius? Not at all. It is likely that this sentence originally

openly declared that Josephus Flavius was Joseph of Arimathaea (or his son), but this association brings with it some insurmountable theological problems, as we have seen. Not the least of which are the late era for the crucifixion and the fact that Jesus was a rebel commander who owned a castle near Tiberias! By all possible means, Josephus Flavius had to be separated from Joseph of Arimathaea, and so a scribe has slipped in a ‘not this one ... but another’.

But why mention the possibility of a confusion if there was no possibility? The mere mention that this Josephus (the son) was not Josephus Flavius means that this association is possible, and that people might have mistaken them. This, plus all the other similarities between these two characters that we have already seen

and analysed, actually means that this association and amalgamation is highly likely.

Arabia and England

According to *The History of the Holy Grail*, after Titus had left Jerusalem, sometime in AD 71, Joseph(us) of Arimathaea set off on yet another evangelical mission to spread the word of Simple Judaism. But instead of travelling west, as we might expect, he set off towards the Euphrates, and his first stop was at Bethany (Bethanya). This account accords very well with the accounts of Saul-Josephus, who says that his first books were specifically commissioned in Aramaic for the people of Palmyra and the Euphrates. It also parallels the argument that I have put forward, that

the primary powerbase of the Galilean Sect lay in Palmyra, Gamala and the east of Syrio-Jordan. Here, it looks as though Joseph(us) was about to take advantage of the Galileans' severely weakened state and convert them to Simple Judaism.

Joseph(us)' small band of evangelists, numbering about seventy, a number that deliberately mimics King Jesus' seventy emissaries in Luke 10:1, then move into the land of the Saracens, and to the city of Sarras. This is not a known city and so this is presumed to be the start of the mythical section of this story. However, Sarras was said to have been located east of the river Jordan and between the cities of Salamander and Babylon.²⁹ The city of Babylon may well be the Babylon we are familiar with (modern Al Hiliah, just south of Baghdad), while

Salamander is possibly a reference to Jerusalem, which Saul-Josephus calls Salem Σαλημ, denoting 'peace'.^{J32}

If we draw a line from Jerusalem to Babylon, the line goes straight through Gamala of the plains and not too far south of Palmyra either. Gamala, and possibly Palmyra too, lay in the province of Bethanya, which is exactly where Joseph(us) said he was travelling to. The name Sarras is not known, of course, and possible Greek interpretations might be Sarra Σαρρα meaning 'princess', the city of the royal family. Whatever the name meant, I think we can safely say that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea had set off for an evangelical mission in the former homelands of the Galilean Sect of Jesus and James.

The king of Sarras is said to have been an idol worshipper called

Evalach, and he was often at war with the Egyptians, who had been gaining the upper hand. In fact, it was Evalach who used the symbol of a red cross on a white background – the insignia of the later Knights Templar. This was a red cross that had been formed from drops of blood, and so this may also have been the origin of the engrailed cross – the red cross with scalloped edges.

However, the Egyptians were not at war with anyone at this time, and so the only thing I can imagine that this phrase refers to is the Galilean Sect. Remember that Jesus was called the Egyptian False Prophet, and so the entire sect may have been known as ‘Egyptians’, and since Joseph(us) was visiting the homelands of the Galilean Sect, this identification is entirely possible. So here we have a king who

was an idol worshipper, which all of the Herodians, Palmyrans and Parthians were, and he was battling with members of the Galilean Sect, and so this description does not really identify exactly who King Evalach was. I can only imagine that this refers to King Herod Agrippa II, who was both for and against the Galileans, and managed to tread this political tightrope for three whole years and survive the entire Jewish War with his lands more or less intact. The Herodian monarchs were all idol worshippers to a degree and since Agrippa had occasionally fought with the Galilean Egyptians, Evalach may well be Agrippa.

Gamala may seem like an unlikely location in which early Christianity might have flourished, following Joseph(us)'s mission there,

as we tend to think of this entire area as being Arab and Muslim, as if it had always been that way. But it was not. The lands of Syria and Jordan were once predominantly Jewish and Christian, and it was only the genocidal crusades of the Muslims that wiped out those long-established Judaeo-Christian communities. Indeed, the very town referred to here, Gamala of the plains (Umm el-Jimal), was once a hub of Christian culture containing no less than fifteen Christian churches. Clearly, this was a location in which Byzantine Christianity flourished in the centuries after the fall of Jerusalem.

The east was also a center of Judaic learning, which is one reason why Saul-Josephus sent his first books out to the east:

I have proposed to myself, given that I live

under the government of the Romans, to translate these books into the Greek tongue, which I formerly composed in the language of our country (Aramaic) and sent to the ... Babylonians, Arabians and the Adiabene.^{J33}

Just like Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, who decided to take his apostles east instead of west after the fall of Jerusalem, Saul-Josephus was doing the very same thing and writing all his books for the eastern market. This is further evidence for Joseph(us) of Arimathaea and Saul-Josephus being the same individual.

However, given that Saul-Josephus' Imperial patrons were Roman, why was his first priority to evangelise in Babylon and Adiabene (Palmyra)? The answer is that there were a great number of Jews living in Babylon, who had been there ever since the Babylonian exile in about

587 BC. More than simply living there, the Babylonian Jews were hugely affluent and influential in that region, and remained so up until 1947 when they were ethnically cleansed and exiled by the majority Arab population. Much is made, in the media, about the Palestinian exiles from the various Arab-Israeli wars between 1948 and 1973, but little is ever discussed about the similar number of Jewish exiles from Babylon (Iraq).

We have already seen the power and wealth of Judas-Zamaris (and Thea Muse and Helena), the exiled Babylonian Jew and his private army, and how they may have fomented the Jewish Revolt in Judaea. It would not have gone unnoticed in Rome that some of these Egypto-Jewish Babylonians, especially the exiles now living in

Gamala and Palmyra, had backed the Jewish Rebellion. Rome did not have the stomach for another conquest, especially if that may spark a Parthian backlash, but the Egypto-Jews of the east still needed placating, and this included the Egypto-Jews of Palmyra and Babylon. I would not be surprised, therefore, if Saul-Joseph(us) of Arimathaea had been dispatched to the East by Vespasian and Titus, to spread the word of Simple Judaism and quell any further discontent and rebellions with his Gentile-friendly (and Rome-friendly) version of Judaism.


The first of these books that Saul-Joseph(us) took to the East was *The Jewish War*, which detailed how the Jewish rebels were defeated by the might of Rome. The second installment was the gospels, which were deliberately formulated with a message

of peace and pacifism at their core. This was a Roman propaganda double, to pacify a restless population. Message one – don't mess with Rome, because we will defeat you. Message two – the world needs peace, not war, so turn the other cheek. Joseph Goebbels would have been wiping a tear in appreciation.

Titus

The *History of the Holy Grail* also has an interesting spin on the life of Titus, Vespasian's son. It maintains that he became ill in Rome with leprosy, and he sought a cure for his ailment. A knight came from Capernaum in Galilee and claimed that he had been cured by King Jesus, so a search was made for anything associated with the (supposedly deceased) King Jesus, in

case it might cure Titus. At last, an old woman came forward, who had a cloth with which she had wiped King Jesus' face while he was carrying his cross.

The old woman was called Veronica, but another version of *History* calls her Mary the Egyptian. Quite plainly this woman was Mary Magdalene, for Mary most probably was of Egyptian descent just as this text claims and as I have demonstrated. This is why Mary the Mother of Jesus was often venerated in France as the Black Madonna. This colour had nothing to do with her racial phenotype, as some enterprising ethnic groups like to claim, it was simply a coded reference to Egypt, which was called Kam in the Egyptian language. However, *kam*  could also mean 'black', and it is said that the nation was named after the black

fertile land of the Nile Delta. Thus the two Marys from the New Testament were both of Egyptian descent, and various coded methods of preserving and promoting that information have been devised down the centuries that allowed the Illuminati to escape the searing fires of the Inquisition.

Incidentally, this re-dated history was a bit troublesome for the Catholic Church, and so we find that the *Cura Sanitatis Tiberii*, a later appendix to the Acts of Pilate, has Veronica curing Emperor Tiberius instead. Tiberius ruled from AD 14 - 37, and so the orthodox chronology had been saved from the heretics once more. Job done. However, the original chronology must have linked this story to Titus, for I can see no good reason why *History of the Holy Grail* should create a heretical story that mentions Vespasian and Titus

if there was no good reason for this. Why deliberately test the fires of the funerary pyre if the story was really about Tiberius?

So it would seem that it was Titus who was ‘cured of leprosy’ by this miraculous cloth, and so the emperor’s son set out to find all of those who had been associated with King Jesus, and it was through this quest that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was discovered in his dungeon. However, one has to bear in mind the distinct possibility that this reference to ‘leprosy’ was yet another coded message. In the Greek, the term used was *lepros* λεπρος and this referred to someone being scaly, which is what someone with leprosy looks like. However, the members of the Galilean Sect were also said to be scaly (with fish-scales), as they venerated the new

constellation of Pisces; which is why Peter became a fisher of men and King Jesus of Gamala was the commander of 600 rebel 'fishermen'. This symbolism may also be the foundation of the Grail legends' many references to the Fisher King, for this was probably a reference to Jesus or his descendants. In other words, the 'infection' that Titus contracted was not leprosy, but Simple Judaism (Christianity).

The text goes on to say that Titus was eventually baptised by Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, although his father, Vespasian was not told of this, and so again it is likely that this reference to 'leprosy' was actually a coded reference to Simple Judaism. While it may seem unlikely that Titus would have become a 'Christian', it is most certain that Saul-Josephus would have

tried to make a convert, especially of someone so potentially powerful as Titus. We know from the Acts of the Apostles that Saul-Josephus had already tried to convert two governors and a king of Judaeo-Israel, so why not a Roman army commander too? Plus, we know that Saul-Josephus had succeeded in making a conversion with Titus Flavius Clemens, the cousin of Titus, so a conversion of Titus almost seems likely. Remember that Saul-Josephus appears to have been closely associated with both Vespasian and Titus for over two years before the former became Emperor, and even longer than that if Saul-Josephus had been a Roman spy, so there was plenty of time to make a swift conversion before the politics of the Empire would have severely hampered his strategy.

Significantly, Titus had taken Berenice, the sister-wife of King Agrippa II, as a lover. But the possibility of a Jewish princess marrying into the Roman Imperial family so soon after the Jewish Revolt was largely unacceptable to most Romans, so the possible love-match was heavily frowned upon. Nevertheless, Titus eventually brought Berenice to Rome for a while, before his father banished her back to Judaea. The significance of this relationship is that it is possible that Saul-Josephus had made a convert of Berenice, which might also explain Agrippa's interest in Simple Judaism. In turn, it is entirely possible that Berenice would have introduced Titus to Simple Judaism, and so his possible conversion may have been due more to the influence of Berenice than the efforts of Saul-

Josephus. Note, however, the distinct possibility that Saul-Josephus had gathered yet more influential Romans into his new creed. He not only had a consul, a senator and a British princess under his wing, but quite possibly the son of the emperor, who would later succeed his father as ruler of the Roman Empire.

While this conversion might help explain the New Testament's character called Titus, who has a large role in 2 Corinthians and the letter to Titus, it is difficult to equate the travels of this gospel Titus with the known travels of Vespasian's son, Titus. A more likely proposition is that the character in the New Testament was actually Titus Flavius Clemens, the cousin of Titus, who later became the third or fourth pope. Titus Clemens, readers might recall, was the reputed author of the

Clementine Recognitions.

Incidentally, the same kind of 'fishy tale' is also told about Abagar, the 'locust' king of Edessa. In the *History of the Church* by Eusebius, King Abagar was also said to have been afflicted by leprosy (so many lepers!) and wrote to King Jesus asking for a cure. Later legends of this same story say that the cure was once more effected by the image of Jesus upon a cloth, in exactly the same manner as Titus. We shall come across this legend again in the next chapter.

Holy Grail

The later volumes in the *Vulgate Cycle* again read as if they were Medieval romances that have been based upon much earlier texts, some of which may no longer be extant. Whereas *History*

is firmly based in the first century AD, *Quest for the Holy Grail* is supposed to be set within the fifth or sixth centuries AD – exactly 450 years after the death of King Jesus, or so it claims. This would equate to 483 AD under the classical chronology and 520 AD under this new revised model.

Quest weaves a chivalrous, heroic tale about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, including Lancelot, Perceval, Gawain and Galahad, and their valiant quest for the Holy Grail. The Grail was a sacred symbol that had many manifestations. At the base level, it was the cup of the Last Supper. But since this cup is not depicted in Leonardo da Vinci's version of the Last Supper, we must divert to Palmyra in Syria to discover what this vessel originally looked like. As can be seen in Chapter XII and in

the colour section, the Grail was envisioned as a wide-brimmed dish that was used in funerary banquets, while the participants lounged upon cushions and sofas. The carvings in the tomb of Yarhai (John the Baptist?) are of a Last Supper scene, which includes the sacred Grail dish or bowl in which bread could be dipped.

However, the Grail was also said to have been a stone, and we shall see further evidence for this symbology in the next two chapters. Finally, the wine of the Grail bowl or dish was symbolic of Jesus' blood, which is why the San Greal (Holy Grail) became the Sang Real (Royal Blood). I have seen a few anguished theologians in recent documentaries stating that this wordplay is modern foolishness, designed to support the kind of theories expounded in *The da Vinci Code*.

However, if this is true then *The da Vinci Code* must be a rather older book that we are led to believe, because the first reference I could find to exactly this same wordplay comes from the *Vulgate's Lancelot-Grail*. In fact, the author of *Lancelot* appears certain that 'Sank Real' (*sic*) is the original version for this sacred totem and the San Greal is the deliberately obfuscativ derivative.

These references to royal blood then lead us onto yet another link with Palmyra, for within the Palmyran tombs one can also find a great deal of vine symbolism, because the red wine of the Grail eucharist is symbolic of the royal bloodline and the royal family tree (the vine). In New Testament terms, this royal bloodline was, of course, a reference to Mary Magdalene and the subsequent

bloodline of King Jesus. But Mary, as we saw in a previous chapter, was probably a princess of Palmyra, and so the symbolism between the sacred vessels (bowls) and the sacred bloodline vessel of the royal womb is complete.

The author(s) of the *Vulgate Cycle* were obviously fully aware of this symbolism and so rather than simply describing a cup or goblet, they couched their descriptions of the Grail in a nebulous and confusing manner. A typical example would be from *Quest for the Holy Grail* which says:

The Holy Grail entered the room, covered with a white silk cloth, but no one could see who carried it. And as soon as it arrived, the room was filled with a delicious fragrance, as if every Earthly spice had been strewn there. The Grail passed through the room ... and as it passed the tables, each place setting was filled with the food the occupant most desired. When everyone was served, the Grail left in

such a way that no one knew what became of it.³⁵

Read the quote again. If the word ‘it’ were to be replaced with ‘her’ or ‘she’, the meaning immediately becomes clear. In reality, the Grail was a young girl wearing perfume, and here she is serving sweetmeats for the honoured knights and guests. This description is copied and expanded upon in Wolfram von Eschenbach’s *Parzival*, where it is said:

The heathen asked for knowledge: what made the empty golden dishes become full? Then spoke Anfortas: ‘My lord, do you see the Grail lying before you?’ The many-coloured heathen (Feirefiz) said: ‘I see nothing except a green cloth. My young lady brought that to us, who stands there before us, wearing a crown. Her looks go to my heart.’³⁶

Here, the author is having even more fun at the expense of his readers, for

this is not a test of perception, it is a test of lateral thinking. He places the Grail before Feirefiz, who is looking vainly for some kind of cup or chalice, but he cannot see anything apart from the young, beautiful princess with the pale coloured skin who carries a green cloth. The scene is a riddle that only the worthy and open-minded will ever decipher, for the Grail was not some invisible chalice that may be standing on a green cloth, rather it is the princess herself. In fact, to be more precise, the chalice was the womb of the young princess, which would eventually bear fruit in a new Grail generation. As Joanne Rittey says in her stupendously tedious textual analysis of the *Vulgate Cycle*:

While Robert (de Boron) does not explicitly compare his female characters to vessels, they are cast in such a way as to emphasize

the function of the vessel at the center of the work; namely the Grail.³⁷



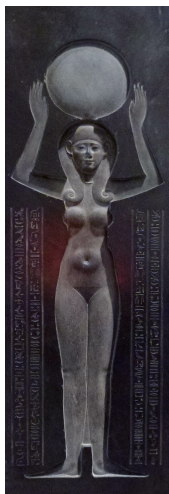
Fig 14.2 An angel of the Grail creating all the fruits one could desire. Temple of Bel, Palmyra.

This knowledge of the Grail was obviously sacrilegious to the Catholic Church, and so it is not surprising that it was once a closely guarded secret, only passed on to the highest of initiates. As Robert de Boron says:

In that book, the great secrets are written, which are called the Grail, When called by their proper name, are known as the secrets of the Grail, He revealed the secrets to him in complete privacy.³⁸

Luckily, we currently live in much more enlightened times and we can now all indulge in this knowledge and speculate freely on the true events of that turbulent era.

Incidentally, the ancient symbol of the feminine was always a V shape, which was known as the 'chalice' (the Grail) and this represented the pubic region of a woman; which is why the ancient Egyptians were always careful to denote the pubic region of women with



Fig

a prominent V. Hence we might also derive 'V' for Virgin and 'V' for Venus.

Conversely, the sexual region of a man was represented by the inverted Λ , called the 'blade', which represented an erect penis. When these two

sexual symbols are superimposed, in sexual union, the outline of the Star of David or the masonic Square and Compass is formed, as can be seen in [fig 14.4](#). This similarity is not simple coincidence, rather it is the origin of these covert symbols, for much of ancient Egyptian and Judaic theology was based upon the concept of the Hieros Gamos ἱερός γάμος , or the Sacred Marriage. The Star of David

14.3 The sky-goddess Nut, with prominent pubic triangle and the Sun emerging from her vagina.

and the Square and Compass are nothing less than the Hieros Gamos in *flagrante delicto*.

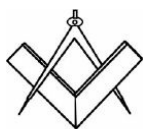
One of the original Grails or receptacles of the bloodline was, of course, Mary Magdalene, and it may be from her that the green cloth imagery in *Parzival* was derived. In Renaissance paintings the two biblical Marys were given different 'uniforms' in order to differentiate them from one another. Mary the Virgin was always depicted in her traditional blue and white robes, because she was called Sapphiras in Acts of the Apostles and the works of Josephus Flavius. A sapphire is a precious blue stone. Conversely, Mary Magdalene invariably wore green and orange, and so the green cloth of the princess in *Parzival* identifies her with the Magdalene.

Grail tables

Quest for the Holy Grail goes on to demonstrate the same kind of Saul-Josephusian egotism that we previously observed in the biblical historian's epistles. This section of the legend recounts the three sacred round tables that have been fabricated through the centuries. The sequence begins with the table of the Last Supper, where Jesus broke bread with his disciples. The second table in the series was the table of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, which was fabricated in England at some time during the first century AD. The third table was the table of the Grail, the famous Round Table of Arthurian legend. A supposed copy of this third table is still to be found in the Great Hall in Winchester, the one that was described at the

beginning of this chapter. This is an interesting sequence, as the legend is suggesting that the original table of the Last Supper was actually a round table, just like the Arthurian one.

The seating plan on the Winchester table comes directly from Grail legend, which indicate that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea had twelve or twenty-four disciples, with himself as the head of the Church making the thirteenth or twenty-fifth. However, in *Quest* we appear to have the same confusion between Joseph(us) of Arimathaea and his son Josephus that we have encountered previously, and so some sections of



*Fig
14.4 The
Star
of
David
formed
from a*

*blade
and
chalice.*

this tale explain that it was Josephus who sat at the ‘head’ of the table and not his father Joseph(us) of Arimathaea. The seat that Joseph(us) of Arimathaea sat at was known as the Seat of Great Peril, as anyone not worthy of this position would surely be killed. Exactly which seat at the table this was seems to vary in the Grail legends, for *The Story of Merlin* says that it was the seat once occupied by Judas, the ‘betrayers’ of Jesus. However, in contrast *Quest* says that it was:

At this table a seat was reserved for Josephus (the son). Our lord had seated him in that chair and no one else dared to sit there. This seat had been patterned upon the seat that our lord had occupied on the day of the Last Supper ... Just as Jesus was the lord and master of his disciples, so should Josephus lead those who were sitting at the table of the Holy Grail.³⁹

In terms of Saul-Josephus being involved in the evolution of these Grail myths this makes a great deal more sense, for here we have Josephus (the son of Arimathaea) modelling himself directly upon King Jesus; indeed Josephus (the son) would appear to be usurping the role of King Jesus completely in taking the equivalent of his seat at the table and leading the equivalent of his disciples. However, some of these texts say that Josephus sat in Judas' seat, the position of the betrayer, and that is exactly what Saul-Josephus was. In other words, the Josephus of Grail legend was behaving in a strikingly similar fashion to the Saul-Josephus of Acts of the Apostles and *The Jewish War*; in being a betrayer, yet seeking to become the new Jesus.

Even more striking, perhaps, is

the tale that a man called Moses tried to sit in Josephus' seat, but through a 'miracle' the Earth swallowed him up. Later, Sir Galahad tries this seat and survives, but we shall see why he may have been spared shortly. One cannot help but see in this tale a usurping not only of King Jesus, but also of the role of the great Judaic lawgiver himself – Moses. The transformation was now complete, and Joseph(us) of Arimathaea (Saul-Josephus) was now the role model and foundation for the entire Church of Simple Judaism – he was the heir to Moses and the heir to Jesus himself, and performed the same miracles as the latter:

When they were come to the palace, they saw the throne that Jesus had prepared for Josephus (the son of Joseph of Arimathaea). The awestruck residents of the city rushed forward to see the maimed man who could now stand.⁴² (my brackets)

All of this should not be so surprising, for it must be obvious by now that Saul-Josephus was indeed Joseph(us) of Arimathaea and, in turn, Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was one and the same as his son Josephus; the latter division of names simply being a ruse designed by the ever-inventive scribes to explain away the generation gap between the orthodox date of King Jesus' crucifixion and the real date of the crucifixion, after the fall of Jerusalem. Joseph(us) of Arimathaea could not have been a middle-aged man in Britain in AD 75 if he had been a pivotal figure at a crucifixion of Jesus in AD 33, so the scribes assumed that this had to be his son. However, Jesus was actually crucified in AD 70, and so Saul-Josephus (of Arimathaea) would have been 33 years old at Jesus' crucifixion and 50 years old in AD 87,

which is a possible date for his visit to England.

So did Saul-Josephus really embark upon a journey to England? Well, the circumstantial evidence looks compelling. Saul-Josephus was a serial evangelist who had grown fat and influential on the back of Imperial patronage and the income from Simple Judaism. He appears to have counted Roman senators, army commanders, an empress and perhaps even an emperor and his Jewish princess among his faithful followers. Significantly, he also had an English prince and princess, Claudia and her son Linus, as followers, and the latter became the second bishop of Rome. It is highly likely, therefore, that Saul-Josephus would have wanted to build upon that patronage and establish a foothold for Simple Judaism in England.

Remember that the Celtic Druids had only just been wiped out by the Roman army in AD 60, an event that may have triggered the revolt of Queen Boadicea (Boudica) of the Iceni. The revolt was eventually put down by Suetonius, and his hopelessly outnumbered Roman legions. Following this battle and the resulting mass slaughter of the Britons in a brilliantly executed set-piece engagement, at what has become known as the Battle of Watling Street, the long rule and influence of the Druid sages over Celtic Europe had been brutally ended and Boadicea was captured. Celtic (Egypto-Celtic) theology had been destroyed and thus there was a religious vacuum in Britain at this time, and the country was ripe for the picking by an adventurous chancer like Saul-Josephus. I am sure

that Saul-Josephus did go to England, and I am joined in this by many other luminaries.

William Blake

It was for this very same reason that William Blake, the eighteenth century esoteric poet and artist, penned the words to the hymn *Jerusalem*. To celebrate the possibility that either King Jesus or Joseph(us) of Arimathaea came to England, Blake came up with the immortal lines:

And did those feet in ancient times,	Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God,	On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the
Countenance
Divine,
And was
Jerusalem
builded here,
Bring me my
Bow of
burning gold,
Bring me my
Spear; O
clouds
unfold!

I will not
cease from
Mental Fight,
Till we have
built
Jerusalem

Shine forth
upon our
clouded hills?

Among those
dark Satanic
Mills?

Bring me my
Arrows of
Desire;

Bring me my
Chariot of
Fire!

Nor shall my
Sword sleep
in my hand,
In England's
green and
pleasant Land.

The meaning of this poem has been debated many times, and many interpretations have been derived. But,

as ever, one can only derive a true interpretation if one knows the context, and in this case the context refers to Blake's own personal beliefs and associations. Central to this, and a portion of his life that is often ignored, is the fact that Blake was a Mason, and so it is not surprising that there is a great deal of masonic thought within his works. A classic example of this is an engraving from his book *Jerusalem*.

Blake

weaves a dramatic story of the fall of Albion (Britain or Europe) into this epic poem, but much of the underlying symbolism that he used was undoubtedly



*Fig 14.5 A
First Degree*

masonic. This can be clearly seen in the following picture which depicts a character that Blake called Los, who is

*tracing board.
The image has
been reversed,
to fall in line
with the
Sumerian
equivalent.*

holding a hammer and tongs, while two characters in the background hold a Sun and a Moon. This imagery is taken directly from the masonic First Degree tracing board, where pillars are normally used to effect exactly the same composition as did Blake.

Note that the tongs in Blake's version of this symbolic imagery are drawn so as to mimic the outline of a pair of dividers (a compass), one of the primary masonic symbols. The purpose of this mimicry is to point out, to those who 'have ears to hear', the true identity of Los, and thus the true

meaning of his poem. In fact, by holding onto a hammer and tongs, Los is being clearly identified with Tubal Cain, the Bible's first metalworker. By extension, he is also being identified with Hiram Abif, one of the prime heroes of masonic mythology.

One might be tempted to dismiss both Blake's imagery and the original masonic tracing board as being recent innovations, in historical terms, as United Grand Lodge was only created in 1717. However, as I have hinted at on many previous occasions, the history of Masonry goes back a great deal further than this, and this particular piece of imagery can also be seen on a Sumerian cylinder seal dating from the third millennium BC. Since this radical suggestion, of a symbolic synergy between Blake and Sumer, would increase the history of

Masonry by a few thousand years, perhaps this particular seal is worth a second glance.⁴³

Note the two characters on either side of the image, who are associated with the Sun and the Moon respectively in both portrayals. The Moon character is also associated with stars in all three images, and the seven closely grouped stars on the Sumerian seal and also on the masonic tracing board demonstrate that this small constellation was actually the Seven Sisters – the Pleiades (Blake has eight stars for some reason). The raised arms, the sword and the hint of something on (or wrapped around) the right hand of the character on the left of the Sumerian image may also hint at this being a representation of Orion, who does indeed have the Pleiades near to his right (as we look at it).

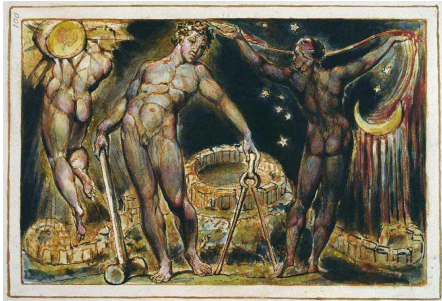


Fig 14.6 Los (Hiram Abif) from William Blake's Jerusalem – a symbolic copy of an already symbolic First Degree masonic tracing board. The three pillars of the tracing board represent the three pyramids of Giza, as was explained in the book 'Eden'.

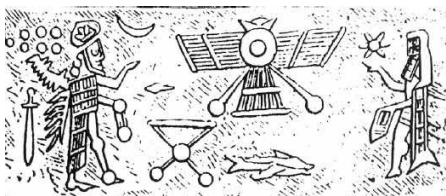


Fig 14.7 Babylonian cylinder seal from approx 1800 BC, the composition that Blake and masonry copied.

Of course in masonic tradition, the left-hand pillar of the Temple of Jerusalem was called Boaz, and its symbolic meaning was 'strength'. In the Sumerian depiction we appear to have an image of Orion the hunter, who was also a character of great strength. In fact, since Orion is said to be carrying a club in his right hand and an animal-skin shield in his left hand (sometimes said to be a bow), this constellation would appear to be an image of the Greek Hercules, who was also known for his strength. Having looked into this more closely, I was surprised to learn that this is not a widely held opinion, and in fact Hercules is normally identified with a small constellation above Ophiuchus. But Hercules' first 'labour' was to kill the lion of Nemean, which he succeeded in doing and subsequently used the

lion's skin as a shield, and so the link between Hercules and Orion seems entirely logical. Hercules carried a club and an animal skin, and that is exactly what Orion is carrying too.

This link would also make sense of Hercules' twelve 'labours'. It has long been my argument that Orion was invoked in ancient mythology as the great guardian of the heavens, who oversaw the transition between one precessional house of the zodiac and another. As a quick reminder, the Sun moves from one constellation of the zodiac to another every 2,200 years or so. This is why, in the great Sumerian epic of Gilgamesh, the heroic character (Gilgamesh-Orion) does battle with the Bull of Heaven (Taurus). If this battle with Taurus referred to the precessional demise of Taurus in about



1800 BC, then the Gilgamesh epic would date from this time, which seems about right. Thus the twelve labours of Hercules would relate to the same kind of task – the overseeing of the precessional movement of the Sun every 2,200 years or so from one astrological house to another. Since there are twelve constellations of the zodiac, Hercules (Orion) would have been set twelve tasks or labours, which would have taken him a total of about 26,000 years to complete.

Fig

Having exercised

14.8 *Boaz*, my own labours in this
the research, it was gratifying
left to finally find that at least
pillar, one Lodge agrees with me,
depicted for there is at least one
as tracing board that carries a
Hercules figure of Hercules upon
(left). the pillar of Boaz. A copy

of this is shown in [fig 14.8](#). So the pillar of Boaz represents strength, and this pillar has been represented over the millennia by either the figure of Orion or Hercules.

To the right of the Orion figure on the Sumerian seal we have a dolphin, representing the constellation of Cetus, the dolphin or whale constellation which does indeed lie to the right of Orion. The figure on the far right of the Sumerian image is actually dressed as Oannes, the half-man half-fish deity who brought wisdom to

mankind. In standard depictions of Oannes, the open mouth of the fish rises above the head of the 'man', and forms a shape akin to a bishop's mitre. In fact, it is often thought that this was the origin of this ritual garment, that has been worn by bishops and popes through the centuries, with Christianity being associated with Pisces and the fish. Note, however, that this depiction of the heavens is exactly as we see it on a modern star-chart: Orion next to the Pleiades, with Cetus to his right and Pisces to the right of Cetus. This Sumerian cylinder seal is a map of the heavens in miniature, and it is a map that has been copied down through the ages for several millennia and into modern masonic ritual.



Fig 14.9 Two images of Orion as Hercules. Traditionally, Orion is facing us, and so the club should be in his right hand.

Above the dolphin position, William Blake has drawn the character representing his fictitious figure Los, who I have already identified as being a representation of Tubal Cain or Hiram Abif. In contrast, the Sumerian seal has something looking like a spacecraft. In reality this ‘spacecraft’ is actually a stylistic image of a flying

Sun-disk: the Sumerian equivalent of the Egyptian flying Sun-disk of Ra which appears on each of the chapter headings in this book. In Blake's version, the circle of the Sun-disk is replicated in the circle of Stonehenge, which is in itself a Sun-temple, with 'wings' of extra stones curling out on either side. But the Sun-symbol is also represented by the figure of Los himself. It is of no coincidence that the reverse of the name Los is Sol, the Roman name for the Sun, and the circle of a Sun-temple resides right next to Los (Sol) – Blake deliberately created many layers for his esoteric imagery and poetry. Finally, on the masonic tracing board this Solar character at the center of this montage is replaced by the all-seeing eye, which is in itself an alternate representation of the Sun-disk. The all-seeing eye represents an

image of the Eye of Ra, which looked down from the pyramidions that surmounted every pyramid in Egypt.

It would appear from all of this synergy that the standard imagery of Masonry was based upon an Egypto-Sumerian predecessor, but this was not a simple matter of copying, as this particular cylinder seal was not discovered until the nineteenth century. This once again demonstrates the antiquity of Masonry, but perhaps more importantly it again demonstrates the true antiquity of the zodiac. I have already demonstrated, in the book *Jesus*, that the Sumerian epic of Gilgamesh told a tale about the constellation of Taurus giving way to Aries; with Gilgamesh being Orion, the Bull of Heaven being Taurus and the Humbaba being the Pleiades. While that analysis was convincing enough

without any pictorial confirmation, on this particular cylinder seal we have an exact depiction of the heavens in that very same era, with the constellations of Pisces and Cetus being depicted and identified in exactly the same fashion as on a modern star chart. It has often been argued that the zodiac was of much later Greek inspiration, but this particular seal conclusively demonstrates that the zodiac we know today has a history that stretches back towards the dawn of history.

If Blake's book *Jerusalem*, from which this particular picture was derived, can provide so much hidden meaning, then what degree of *gnosis* can his other works conceal? What, for instance, can the poem *Jerusalem* (from the book *Milton*, not *Jerusalem*) be concealing? The lines of this

famous poem have already been given, and the following is a short line-by-line analysis:

a. The first and most obvious connection that most people have made is that the famous 'feet' have to be connected with either King Jesus or perhaps with Joseph(us) of Arimathaea. The former is, in fact, the more likely, as Blake mentions the Lamb of God, which is a clear allusion to King Jesus. However, the mythological connection between Glastonbury and Joseph appears to be far stronger than with Jesus himself. Yet Blake may have been correct after all, for the next chapter will demonstrate exactly where in England Jesus lived.

b. The 'countenance divine' that shines forth is a reference to the Sun-god, the divine rays of the great Aton-Ra. Masonry was derived from Egypt, and more specifically from the court of Pharaoh Akhenaton, Egypt's great rebel monotheist, and so the theology of the Craft is biased towards a veneration of the Cosmos. But Egyptian solar worship was never as crude as the worship of the physical Sun, instead it was a veneration of the divine laws that created and maintained the Cosmos. Egyptian theology, first century *gnosis* and thus the principles of the later Craft, were therefore closely aligned to what we would now call science. Indeed, that is effectively what *gnosis*

means – science.

c. The question of Jerusalem being built in England is the central tenet of this poem: the possibility that King Jesus came to these shores and established a religion that long predated the Church of Rome. It is unlikely that Blake knew of the ‘elliptical’ cathedral that Jesus built in England, but his analysis – that as Jerusalem was destroyed in Judaea a new Jerusalem arose in England – is surprisingly accurate.

Another of Blake’s poems was entitled ‘All religions are One’, a title that sums up much of this philosophy in a nutshell, and it again demonstrates his masonic bias, as this equality in

theology is one of the central tenets of the Craft. As Blake wrote in *Jerusalem*:

Jerusalem, the Emanation of the Giant Albion! Can it be? Is it a truth that the learned have explored? Was Britain the primitive seat of the Patriarchal Religion? If it is true, my title page is also true, that Jerusalem was, and is, the Emanation of the Giant Albion ... All things begin and end in Albion's ancient Druid rocky shore. Your ancestors derived their origin from Abraham, Heber, Shem, and Noah, who were Druids, as the Druid Temples over the whole Earth witness to this day.⁴⁴

d. The reference to 'satanic mills' has often been regarded as a broadside against the blossoming Industrial Revolution in Britain. While Blake did have his concerns about the cogs of industry

undermining the harmony of nature, I don't see him as a Luddite. After all, Masonry was the driving force behind eighteenth century science, with most of its practitioners belonging to the newly formed Grand Lodge of England and the parallel Royal Society (Britain's foremost scientific institution), and Blake himself called Sir Isaac Newton 'a mighty spirit'.

The alternative possibility is that these 'satanic mills' actually represented the cathedrals of the Catholic Church, an institution that Blake loathed for its oppression of thought and spirit. Near Blake's home in London, stood the great Albion Flour Mills, one of the first industrial complexes to

mimic the great size and splendour of the great cathedrals. Since Blake was not in a position to attack the Church openly, for it was still a very powerful and oppressive institution in his day, he could nevertheless lampoon their great cathedrals as being the same as this great flour mill. No doubt the workers in these mills laboured slavishly and unthinkingly at their allotted stations, while oppressive managers prowled the works looking for victims to beat or bawl at. This was a powerful allusion to the oppression of the people by the Catholic priesthood, in their equally majestic mills (cathedrals); and since they were doing the work

of Satan himself, in suppressing freedom of thought and expression, the cathedrals of the Catholic Church became the satanic mills of Albion.

e. The bringing of bows, chariots and spears was most probably a reference to Egypt once more. The Egyptian expedition of Napoleon Bonaparte had taken place in 1798, while the book *Milton* (and the poem *Jerusalem*) was not published until 1805. Napoleon's expedition to Egypt had been pseudo-masonic in the first place, with one of the prime objectives being the investigation of Egyptian history and therefore the investigation of masonic heritage. To this end the French military took along with

them 160 *savants*, including scientists, mathematicians, historians, cartographers, artists and linguists.

The purpose of the expedition, apart from any strategic and economic gain, was to investigate and research the entire spectrum of Egyptian history. Accordingly, by the time Blake came to write the poem *Jerusalem*, a hero figure from Egypt was readily available from the first few lithographs that had come back to Europe from Egypt. These displayed the warrior pharaoh in his chariot, with spear, arrows and bow; armed and primed to fight for the cause of the Old Church, the Church that transcended all contemporary Churches which

Blake despised as the creations of men.

f. The 'Mental fight' was a reference to the intellectual battle between the forces of the oppressive orthodox Church and the free-thinking masonic 'Church'. This was typified by Blake's opposition to John Milton, who wrote *Paradise Lost*. While Blake would have approved of Milton's synthesis of Pagan and Christian beliefs, he also considered that Milton had descended too far into the fire-and-brimstone theology of the Parliamentary Puritans. The 'mental fight' was therefore a crusade to keep the theological fundamentalists out of religion, and most certainly to keep them away from any control over our

secular world. It is a fight that continues to this very day.



*Fig 14.10 The Egyptian royal hero figure, with chariot, spear, bow and arrows.
Bring me my Bow of burning gold,
Bring me my Arrows of Desire, Bring
me my Spear; O clouds unfold, Bring
me my Chariot of Fire!*

The site of this New Jerusalem, which was supposed to have been ‘builded here among England’s pleasant pastures’, is often assumed to refer to Glastonbury. According to William of

Malmesbury, the site was said to have been founded by Joseph(us) of Arimathaea and his twelve disciples, who had been sent to England by Philip and James, 63 years after Jesus' birth.⁴⁵ If King Jesus had been born in AD 14, as Irenaeus claimed, then the site would have been founded in about AD 77.

However, as we shall see in the next chapter, the real site of the New Jerusalem actually lies a few score miles further north of Glastonbury, in the shires of Cheshire. The date for the foundation of the Glastonbury site is unknown, but the date for the founding of the Chester site is known quite precisely, for there is a lead water pipe that runs through the foundations. That water pipe mentions the tenth year of the reign of Vespasian, and so it is dated to AD 79. Perhaps William of

Malmesbury was right in his chronology.

Age of Arthur

We have been slowly uncovering a rather different Grail story to the one we are used to, and it is a story that may well be based upon real historical events. But, if the *Vulgate Cycle* was based upon historical events, in what era did these Arthurian legends actually occur? More specifically, when did King Arthur actually preside over his kingdom and the twelve knights of the Round Table? And who was Arthur; was he a mythical construct or a real historical figure?

It is often assumed that the name ‘Arthur’ was derived from the Celto-Welsh word *art* meaning ‘bear’, with the full name meaning ‘Bear Man’. In

turn, the Latino-Welsh accounts of Arthur tend to indicate that he was a *dux bellorum* or an *ameraudur* meaning 'army commander', rather than 'king'. This gives us a convenient image of a Celtic warrior defending Greater Britannia against the slow but steady invasion by the Anglo-Saxons, who were beginning to encroach on eastern England during this Dark Age era. Such a king or great leader does fleetingly appear within the historical or literary records of Nenius and others, but this was not the fully fledged heroic character of King Arthur as we know him. Even during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, during which these Grail legends were being written, William of Newburgh, a twelfth century monk from Yorkshire, wrote:

It is quite clear that everything this man wrote

about Arthur and his successors, or indeed about his predecessors from Vortigern onwards, was made up, partly by himself and partly by others, either from an inordinate love of lying, or for the sake of pleasing the Britons.⁴⁶

Being a dutiful monk, William may have had an ulterior motive in attempting to rubbish the Grail myths, especially if they trod on the toes of the New Testament gospels, but it is nevertheless true that there is no trace of the great Arthurian hero in the archaeology of this era. So what are we to make of this situation? Were the legends of King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table just that – legends with no historical foundation whatsoever? Were Nenius and the many authors of the *Annales Cambriae* mistaken in their histories of Britain?

The clue to solving this mystery, and to finding the true history of King

Arthur, is to be found in the *Vulgate Cycle*. As has already been pointed out, the Grail legends in the *Vulgate* contain a few chronological discrepancies, with the same characters appearing in different eras. The net result of these dislocations is a four-decade leap in the chronology to cover up the true date for Jesus' crucifixion. However, the same is true of the court of King Arthur, which also cannot make up its mind which era it wants to be in. But this is an important point, for without a secure era or region for the establishment of King Arthur's court, we can never hope to identify who Arthur really was. So when did King Arthur really reign?

Galahad. The first chronological jump involves one of the most famous of the Grail personalities – Sir Galahad. The brave knight and hero called Galahad

was said to have been the illegitimate son of Lancelot and Elaine of Corbenic; Galahad was the Red Knight who embarked on a quest for the Grail. However, there is a problem with the era in which Galahad is said to have lived, for after many a trial and adventure, he witnesses the death of King Mordrain, the king who saved Joseph(us) of Arimathaea from prison, the king who I have identified with Agrippa II of Syrio-Judaea. But this cannot be so, for Joseph(us) of Arimathaea would have visited Britain in about AD 87, while the Knights of the Round Table were said to have lived in the sixth century AD.

Galahad sat at the head of the king's bed, wrapped his arms around him ... as the old man requested. King Mordrain died in Galahad's arms.⁴⁷

The claim that Sir Galahad visited the deathbed of King Mordrain is central to solving the entire Grail mythology, for an obvious deduction from this account is that Sir Galahad actually lived in the first century AD. If this was so, then the equally obvious candidate for Sir Galahad would be the son (or brother, depending on the text) of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, who was called Galahad of Hoselice (Wales) in these tales. In fact, *Quest* has Galahad visiting the tomb of Galahad of Hoselice directly after the death of King Mordrain, which again demonstrates the close link between these 'two' characters.

While this may seem a trifle rash, to casually re-date the Grail legends by four hundred years or so, the tale then goes on to relate another curious meeting. Not satisfied with

meeting Mordrain, Sir Galahad then meets up with Joseph(us) of Arimathaea:

There descended from the sky ... a man dressed in bishop's vestments, with a crozier in his hand and a mitre on his head. The man had on his forehead an inscription that read: 'This is Josephus, the first Christian Bishop, consecrated by our lord at the city of Sarras. The knights understood the inscription but wondered how this could be, since Josephus had died more than three hundred years before.⁴⁸

The author has used another convenient miracle to explain the chronological dislocation here, but the truth is probably more logical and pragmatic. Since Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was most definitely a first century AD character, it would again seem likely that Sir Galahad hailed from this same era.

Note also in this quote how

Joseph(us) of Arimathaea is being described as the first bishop of the Church of Simple Judaism: the first Christian pope. But in previous chapters it has already been shown that it was Saul-Josephus who became the first bishop of Rome, during his short stay in the Imperial city in AD 63 - 66. This was, of course, the role that Saul-Josephus saw himself in. Saul-Josephus had been the creator and the first evangelist of Simple Judaism, and since he had been (forcibly) based in Rome during the early AD 60s, he would have claimed the title 'Bishop of Rome' – the first pope. But this means that the first pope was called either Joseph(us) of Arimathaea or Saul-Josephus, and so these 'two' characters just have to be the same person.

Lancelot. This very early era for the life of Galahad is confirmed in *Lancelot*. In this tale, Sir Lancelot meets the ghost of Simeon, the nephew of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, who confirms that Lancelot's mother was his cousin.⁴⁹ But this would make Lancelot the great nephew of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, and if the latter was born in AD 37 then Lancelot would also have been born in the first century AD. Lancelot then goes to meet Queen Guenevere, his long-standing mistress, who may be old at this time but was very much alive still. We might deduce from all of this that the meeting between Lancelot and an elderly Guenevere occurred in the AD 90s, and so the elderly King Arthur and Queen Guenevere must have been born in the AD 10s or 20s. It would appear, therefore, that the Grail stories actually

relate events that occurred in the first century AD.

Nero. Another chronological dislocation is present in the volume of the *Vulgate Cycle* known as *The Story of Merlin*. Like many of the other volumes, the entire story is set in the Dark Ages of the sixth century and it describes the many battles against the Saxons who were invading Britain in this era. However, Merlin goes off to Rome to see the Emperor, which is strange because the Western Empire of Rome did not exist in this era, as it collapsed completely in AD 468. The primary reason for the Saxons invading Britain during the Dark Ages was that the Western Roman Empire had collapsed, and there was nobody left to defend the shores of Britain. So what was Merlin doing in Rome during the

Dark Ages? Well, visiting Julius Caesar, of course!

The author of *Merlin* must have been a trifle confused here, for this emperor could not have been Julius Caesar. The life and reign of Julius predates the life of King Jesus and so a story that is based upon Joseph(us) of Arimathaea cannot include a reference to Julius Caesar. So who may this emperor have been? A clue may be present in a mention of the Feast of John the Baptist. John was probably born in AD 4 and his traditional feast day is at the summer solstice, and therefore any emperor mentioned while this feast was being celebrated would have to have reigned in the first century or later.

Another clue can be seen in the description of this emperor's court, for it is said that the emperor's wife was a

lustful lass who kept twelve young men, disguised as young ladies, to service her sexual appetite. While sexual infidelity may have been common in Roman courtly life, there is one particular emperor's wife who was particularly lascivious, and that was Poppaea, the courtesan-wife of Emperor Nero. Significantly, this emperor in *Merlin* was then said to have found a young man among his courtiers who turned out to be a woman, and married her. Again this sounds like an extract from the life of Nero, for he 'married' Sporus, a young lad that looked like his recently departed wife, Poppaea. Nero even went to the extreme of completely castrating^{*3} Sporus, so that the unfortunate boy did indeed become (look like) a woman.⁵²

Agrippa. An even stranger

chronological dislocation occurs in the *Vulgate's* epic called *Lancelot*. Here it is said that King Vadalon of North Wales besieged King Agrippes. But the latter king's daughter realized that it was 'intensely hot and that all the springs had dried up' and the besiegers of their castle relied solely on one remaining spring for their water supplies and would die without it; so she poisoned this spring.⁵³ Such a story hardly makes any sense, for anyone who has visited the perennially saturated lands of Wales would know that King Vadalon would have had a hundred springs to choose from, and would have not cared one jot about a particular spring being poisoned.

This story would, however, make a great deal of sense if it were relocated to Syrio-Judaea, where the availability of fresh water is a

perennial headache. If we are allowed this liberty, we might also find a similar scenario, where there was an upstart prince called Varus, who was prime minister to King Agrippa II. Varus grew so bold that he usurped the king's authority and challenged his position, but King Agrippa finally brought him under control and dismissed him from his service. This was such a well-known incident that a version of these events was even transcribed into the New Testament, as we saw in a previous chapter, but here we appear to have the same story and this time it has been incongruously relocated in Wales. So King Agrippes of North Wales was probably King Agrippa of Syrio-Judaea; and this was not the Dark Ages, but the first century AD.

Caiaphas. A similar confusion of names occurs in *The Post Vulgate Quest for the Holy Grail*, a later version of the Grail stories that was based upon the earlier volume called *Quest*. Here Perceval and Sir Galahad meet an old man called Caiaphas:

I am a man who has lived long ... Caiaphas is my name. I was Bishop of Jerusalem in the time when (Vespasian) was Emperor of Rome. Titus, Vespasian's son had great mercy, for he did not want to kill me ... but put me alone in a small boat ... I drifted in torment upon the sea for more than two hundred years ... until providence brought the boat here.⁵⁴

This Caiaphas was, of course, the Caiaphas who is mentioned in the New Testament as being the high priest of Jerusalem at the time that Jesus was crucified. But he would have needed to have been drifting in his boat for more like five hundred years to reach the era

of the Saxon invasions that are mentioned in adjoining chapters. Once again we see that the original Grail legends related stories that dated from the first century AD but were later adapted to reflect a Dark Ages era.

The mention of Caiaphas in the Grail legends also goes some way towards supporting the new chronology for the biblical crucifixion. All the New Testament gospels assert that Caiaphas was the high priest of Jerusalem at the time when Jesus was crucified; indeed, he was the Jewish priest and judge who Jesus was brought before. However, the *Vulgate* legends are confidently indicating that Caiaphas was high priest during the period when Vespasian was emperor of Rome. This would be impossible under the traditional chronology, but it falls exactly in line with the new

chronology, which has demonstrated that Saul-Josephus of Arimathaea happened upon the crucifixion of Jesus (of Gamala) in the Kidron Valley during the latter stages of the siege of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Lancelot. Further evidence for a first century King Arthur, who was linked to King Jesus, can be seen in the *Antiquities of Glastonbury*. Here in the margins of the text, a venerable hand has penned:

Joseph of Arimathaea with his son Josephus ... came to Britain, now called England, as the *Book of the Acts of King Arthur* testifies ... in the search for a certain renowned soldier called Lancelot du Lac ... a certain hermit explains the mystery of a certain fountain which continuously changed its taste and colour ... it is also written that miracles should not cease until the great lion had come, having a tail fastened with great chains.⁵⁵

Here again we have Lancelot and Joseph(us) of Arimathaea appearing in the same era. But we also have an interesting reference to a lion in chains. The lion is actually the symbol of Judah, the tribe of King Jesus-Izas himself, and so the reference here to a lion in chains could well be a direct allusion to an exiled prisoner from the tribe of Judah. Interestingly, in the next chapter there will be an account of King Jesus being forcibly exiled to England and the presence of a sacred fountain in his place of exile.

Prestor John. We find similar allusions to an earlier date for King Arthur in Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*. Here, we have an account of the hero figure, Parzival (Perceval) becoming a knight of King Arthur, and so Parzival and King Arthur were contemporaries, as is well known.

However, Parzival then meets and finally supersedes the Fisher King, and yet it is highly likely that the Fisher King was a reference to King Jesus-Isas himself.⁵⁶

Likewise, the son of Feirefiz, Parzival's half-brother, was Prester John, the legendry priest-king of the east.⁵⁷ Although Prester John now appears to be linked more with Ethiopia, the original legends indicated that he was John the Presbyter, who was either a disciple of Jesus or a contemporary of Jesus, who is mentioned by Papius, through Eusebius, as being a prominent first century evangelist for Simple Judaism in 'Asia'. It is generally assumed that Asia means India, for that is how Eusebius interprets it, but the geography of Prester John's evangelism is decidedly obscure,

which is why it was so easily transferred to Ethiopia at a later date. Later chroniclers claimed that his diocese was 'beyond the Muslim lands', but since Islam had not been invented in this early era, or even in the era of Eusebius, that definition is of little use. Reading between the lines, it is entirely possible that Prester John was based in Parthia (Persia), for there were once large Jewish populations throughout Persia who could be easily converted to Simple Judaism. Virtually none of those populations exists now, of course, as they have all been subsumed or eradicated by Islam.

Both of these interpretations would seem to place Arthur in the same era as Jesus, rather than in the sixth century AD. The first of these might appear to separate King Arthur and King Jesus. However, since the

stories of the Fisher King and King Arthur seem to be parallel yet separate within *Parzival*, one cannot help thinking that two similar stories have been melded into one, and the Fisher King is actually a pseudonym for King Arthur.

Ship of Solomon. This process re-dating can also be seen in the story of the abandoned ship of King Solomon, which sailed the seven seas for nearly a thousand years like some magical precursor to the Marie Celeste. In *History of the Grail* the ship, which contained a magical bed and sword, is discovered and explored by Nascien, a contemporary of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea. However, in *Quest for the Holy Grail* the discovery of this ship is discussed in exactly the same fashion, but the primary hero on this occasion is Galahad, a famous knight of the court

of King Arthur. Again, we see that these tales were primarily composed in the first century and not the Dark Ages.⁵⁸

Altered editions. That this re-dating and relocation of the Grail legends was deliberate can probably be seen in *The History of the Holy Grail*, for there are several versions of this text and each has subtle differences. These differences have been copied and continued into the venerable and modern French editions of *History* and these give a valuable insight into how this new chronology and location for the Grail stories was derived. For instance, the 1875 Hatcher edition mentions ‘France’, ‘Britain’, and ‘Herod the Traitor’. In great contrast, the 1989 Ponceau edition has restored these references back to ‘Euphrates’, ‘Bethany’, and ‘Herod the Tetrarch’.

Presumably Eugene Hatcher had good reason to mention the locations that he did, but the net result of these revisions, had they not been restored, would have been to shift the entire story of Joseph(us) of Arimathea and the city of Sarras from Syrio-Judaea to northwest Europe.

These chronological dislocations, and many more besides, plus the odd fleeting mention in many of the *Vulgate Cycle's* stories of a battle between King Arthur and the Roman legions and also a mention of Emperor Hadrian, all point towards a much earlier date for the Grail legends. Interestingly, the battle with the Romans was again fought over the imposition of taxes.⁵⁹ What may have happened here is that the Grail legends were based upon an original story that detailed the traumatic events of first century Syrio-

Judaea – events that involved military disputes between King Jesus of Gamala and the Roman legions over the imposition of taxes. This was an ancient, fascinating and possibly sacred tale that centered upon the life of the biblical King Jesus-Izas, but it was a real history that was decidedly heretical to the Catholic Church.

Jesus, according to the Catholic creed, was a pauper pacifist who died in Judaea in AD 33, and anyone implying otherwise would have been introduced to a bed of glowing embers, which were not intended to banish a morning chill. In this era, Gnostics criticised or crossed the Catholic Church at their own peril. The only way to overcome this threat to life and limb was to cloak these stories in a gloss of Medieval chivalry that was perhaps set in a Dark Age era, which

is in itself a further chronological dislocation. Thus Arthur became a warrior king of the fifth or sixth centuries who lived anywhere from Gaul to Scotland and commanded a pseudo-Medieval court. The resulting mythology was confusing in the extreme, but the authors, bards and readers were saved from an untimely death.

Round Table

From the position of a twelfth century scribe, a story about a Dark Ages king like Arthur doing battle with the Roman army may have sounded quite reasonable, for the scribe may have had no idea about the precise chronology for the decline of the Western Roman Empire. But we now know much more about this era and so

it is obvious that many of the *Vulgate Cycle's* scenarios involving the Romans are historically impossible. Thus, having fully deciphered the true chronology and history of these Grail legends, we can now join the select group of people who would have originally known that these myths referred to the Syrio-Judaea of the first century AD, and in this manner the Grail legends now make much more sense. There was indeed a first century AD warrior-king of Syrio-Judaea who was doing battle with the Roman army, and his name was King Jesus. This is why Jesus said:

(Jesus said) but as for those my enemies, who would not have me for their king, bring them here and kill them in my presence. [B60](#)

So much for peace, love and turning the other cheek. This is not a verse that

is often preached from the pulpit, but it is symptomatic of the true, revolutionary aims of King Jesus and the zealous disciples of the Fourth Sect. The nominative link between this warrior-king called Jesus and the Celtic warrior-king called Arthur will become apparent shortly.

The various Grail legends call the court of King Arthur and the Fisher King either Camelot, Corbenic or Munsalvasche, a great castle that is supposed to be very remote and lie in a vast forest next to a river somewhere on the western British coastline overlooking Ireland. Lacking a suitable Dark Ages castle in this area, many people have suggested Cadbury Castle in Somerset or even Tintagel in Cornwall as being possible sites. But Cadbury is an inland Iron Age fort dating from some 500 BC, while



Tintagel is a dramatic castle which sits on a rugged outcrop overlooking the Atlantic that was not built until the twelfth century AD. In which case, neither of these locations fit the classical Dark Age era for these Grail legends, let alone the first century date being uncovered in this chapter.

Another potential site for Camelot lies in eastern Britain, for it has not gone unnoticed that there is a strong linguistic link between Camelot and Camulodunum, the first Roman fortress to be constructed in Britain. However, this site is similarly unsuitable due to its eastern location and the date of its construction, which is far too early for the orthodox date of these legends; although this date would suit the new chronology rather well.

Camulodunum was actually a very early Roman fortress built by

Julius Caesar in 54 BC, an early date which may have caused some confusion among later scribes, but this abortive Roman invasion only lasted a year or so. Camulodunum was not resettled until AD 43, under Emperor Claudius, when a large Roman *castra* or fortress was constructed on this site, which eventually became the modern city of Colchester. The reason why this name and site may be pertinent to this investigation is that the cathedral that King Jesus may have built in England was inside an identical Roman fortress; but it wasn't at Camulodunum (Camelot), and this may have caused a further degree of confusion.

In fact, it is likely that the name 'Camelot' came from the location that Jesus-Izas' was originally associated with. He was said to be 'of Gamala', and I have already identified Gamala

as being the ruined town of Umm el-Jimal, which is said to have been named after the Arabic word for a camel. The Hebrew original for this name is *gamal* גמל meaning ‘camel’, from which the Arabic for Gamala was derived. However, as we saw previously, the name and title ‘Gamala’ was not coined after a humble camel, but after the lands of ancient Egypt, which were called Kam . Egypt subsequently became linked to the imagery of the camel not because this animal was a handy beast of burden in that region, but because the camel carried the sacred Twin Peaks of Egyptian mythology on its back, in the form of one or two humps. Thus the camel became a *kamar* (*kamal*) , after the name for Egypt, and so Jesus may have been named ‘Jesus of Egypt’ (Jesus of

Gamala) as much as he was called ‘Jesus of the town of Gamala’.

The standard title of ‘Gamala’ that I have been using for King Jesus has obviously been taken from the Hebrew-Aramaic, but sometimes it would appear that Saul-Josephus spoke more Greek than Aramaic, for he says that the people of Gamala could not pronounce ‘camel’ properly.^{J61} He was obviously expecting them to use the Greek *kamelos* καμηλος rather than the Hebrew-Aramaic *gamal* גמל. But this change in language and pronunciation would have made an equivalent change to the pronunciation for the name for Egypt too, which would have become Kamelos instead of Gamala. These explanations may give us a good reason for ‘Camelot’ being adopted as the name of King Arthur’s mythical castle – for Jesus of

Gamala may also have been known as Jesus of Kamalos (Jesus of Egypt). But this change in language and pronunciation would also give the title of this book a slightly more poetic ring, for the revised title would now be:

King Jesus: From Kamelos to Kamelot

Table of the World

One of the primary symbols and artifacts in this great castle of Camelot was the Round Table. However, remember that *Quest for the Holy Grail* said that there were three sacred tables. The first of these was the table of the Last Supper, the second was the Round Table of Joseph(us) of

Arimathaea, while the third was the Round Table of Arthurian legend. This is interesting for this Grail tradition of a round table implies that the table of the Last Supper may have been round, in the same manner as the great table in Winchester's Great Hall. Thus, the depiction by Leonardo da Vinci and all the other artists who have depicted this Last Supper scene may have been totally wrong. The Last Supper table was probably a Round Table, and the account in *Quest* specifically mentions that this circular layout represented the round shape of the Earth.

This circular imagery for the Earth was well known and extensively used in the early medieval era, and the fourteenth century Mappa Mundi (Map of the World) in Hereford Cathedral is a good example of this genre. These maps, and the Round Table imagery

that they were once based upon, is a good indication that it was widely known in this era that the Earth was 'round' (spherical). I have already argued in the book *Tempest* that the domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and the Cathedral of Aya Sophia in Istanbul, and all of the later churches and mosques that have copied this layout, were also based upon the spherical form of the Earth. The four minarets at each corner of the Aya Sophia represent the four pillars that held the skies aloft, as indicated by Egyptian theology, while the dome in the center of the complex represented the spherical Earth.

This covert symbology would mean that the spherical nature of the Earth was still understood in this early era, even though the Dark Ages in the

West was widely known for its belief in a flat Earth. Masonic tradition confirms that the spherical form of the Earth was known in an early era when it confidently states that the twin pillars of Jachin and Boaz, that graced the entrance to King Solomon's Temple, were surmounted by a spherical representation of the Cosmos and a spherical representation of the Earth. Clearly, the spherical form of the Earth was known long before the musings of Pythagoras in the sixth century BC and the empirical evidence supplied by Eratosthenes in the third century BC.



Fig 14.11 The circular Mappa Mundi from Hereford Cathedral.

In fact, if we are allowed to speculate freely, it is entirely possible that the belief in a flat Earth was derived from the Round Table of Arthurian legend. *Quest* says that the round shape of the table was based upon the roundness of the Earth, and so it is not beyond the realms of possibility that the Last Supper table and the Arthurian Round

Table were both painted with the outlines of a map of the Earth, as it was understood in those times. The Round Table was a Mappa Mundi that the twelve knights could all sit around and contemplate. However, had the understanding that the image on the table was simply a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional sphere been lost, then subsequent generations would have understood that the Earth was circular but flat, just as the image on the table was.

That these royal tables may have been painted with an image of the Earth may not be so unlikely as it may at first seem. A map of the Earth represented valuable knowledge, for it gave merchants the ability to trade with other nations, tax-collectors the expertise to gather tributes from dependent nations, and it also allowed

an army commander to accurately guide his forces to the right location. Empires cannot exist without maps, and the ability of the aristocratic officials and commanders to gather around those maps and understand the extent of the empire and the goals of its military campaigns. In this guise, the Round Table was no more than a plotting chart, similar to those that might exist in any modern military bunker.

However, there was also a sacred aspect to the form of the Earth, for the ancient theology of Egypt and its surrounding nations was predominantly one of astronomy or astrology. In this sacred guise, the form of the Earth and its relationship to the Solar System and the wider Cosmos was a fundamental component of the Great Architect's grand design, both

for the Earth and the beings that populated its surface. Indeed, to be slightly more esoteric, this reverence for the form of the Earth may well go back into the far distant past of man's civilisation and his reverence for the workings of the Cosmos, for I have already demonstrated in another work that the great henges of Britain, like Avebury and Stonehenge, were also representations of the circular (spherical) form of the Earth.

Arthur of Egypt

Undoubtedly, there appears to have been a great confusion in the chronology of these Grail myths, and so we now have the situation where King Arthur may have been a warrior-hero figure who actually lived in the first century AD rather than the Dark

Ages. In addition, there is also a great deal of evidence to show that on some occasions the location of these events should be transported from England to Syrio-Judaea. What we are looking for, therefore, is a great king of first century Syrio-Judaea who was associated with twelve 'knights' of the Round Table. In addition, this hero-king may have been called Arthur of Kamalos, in the Greek, or perhaps even Arthur of Gamala, in the Hebrew-Aramaic. In other words, as has already been suggested, King Arthur may be none other than a literary incarnation of King Jesus-Izas of Gamala – the biblical Jesus and his twelve disciples of the Round Last Supper Table. This is probably why the legends of Arthur say that he will rise up again at some point in the distant future, in New Testament

fashion, and lead his oppressed people to victory.

What may have happened here is that when Saul-Josephus rewrote the life of King Jesus, and created the largely pacifist hero that we find in the New Testament, the true life of Jesus was still well known. Other characters in this epic military struggle, which we know today as the Jewish Civil War, were well aware that Jesus (of Gamala or Kamelos) was in fact a warrior hero who controlled an army of mounted archers, plus a host of light infantry. They would have known that Jesus (of Gamala) was an exiled prince of Rome, Egypt and Parthia, who had tried valiantly and vainly to establish himself on the thrones of Judaea and Rome. And they may also have known that Jesus had once lived in exile in England, as we shall see in the next

chapter.

Knowing this, it would appear that someone wrote a historical, swashbuckling version of the New Testament that portrayed King Jesus as a warrior-hero of Syrio-Judaea; and that someone was probably King Jesus-Izas of Tiberias himself, the author who Saul-Josephus so despised. In subsequent eras, no doubt influenced in some manner by the travels of the Knights Templar, some enterprising bard discovered this tale of 'Jesus the warrior-king' and his links to England and decided to adapt it for domestic Medieval European ears. But this adaptation was not simply done to court local popularity, it would also have been an essential obfuscation of the true story if the author was to escape the wrath of the Catholic Church. Thus the account of King Jesus

of Gamala's battles in Syrio-Judaea during the first century AD became an account of King Arthur's battles in and around Britain during the Dark Ages.

However, the fact that King Arthur was actually related to Jesus and the royal line of King David is plainly stated on at least two occasions in the *Vulgate Cycle*. The first of these is when King Solomon wonders when his royal line will end. The answer to this is said not to be with Mary the Virgin, but with a virginal, chivalrous knight who will be the greatest of all time. The identity of this knight is not implicitly given at this point in the text, but it is clear that either Perceval or Galahad is intended.⁶²


The second occasion is when King Solomon searches for a sword to place in his magical boat, which will sail the seven seas for a thousand years

until this particular chivalrous knight discovers it. The sword has special powers and cannot be withdrawn from its scabbard except by the knight in question. The ship and its sword are eventually discovered many centuries later by the Grail knights. Perceval and Bors try to grip the sword, but it proved to be a slip on each occasion (they fail to withdraw the sword). Galahad initially refuses to touch the sword, but after much persuasion he withdraws the sword and finds that it was meant for him.⁶³

This story obviously has great parallels with the Sword in the Stone episode, which will be discussed in the next chapter; especially as the ‘real’ sword and stone are found floating in a lake in *Quest*, in a very similar fashion to the magical ship and its sword.⁶⁴ However, the interesting

snippet of information that falls out of this amalgamation of texts is that this magical sword originally belonged to King David; and so in both of these extracts we see a direct allusion to King Arthur being of the Judaic line of King David and King Solomon, just as was King Jesus himself. Thus Excalibur, the magical sword of Grail legend, was actually a Judaic relic of some antiquity before it was claimed by King Arthur (or Sir Galahad).^{*4}

This Judaic heritage for Excalibur is proven by the etymological roots for the name of this magical sword, which appear to be decidedly Egypto-Judaic. The earliest Grail legends call this sword Caliburn rather than Excalibur, but if we want to take this name back into the Egypto-Hebrew we should be aware that many such words suffer an exchange

between the 'r' and 'l' consonants. So the name we would be looking for might sound something more like Careburn (Khareburn), rather than Caliburn (Khaliburn). Not surprisingly, given the evidence uncovered so far, the Hebrew word *khareb* חרב does indeed mean 'sword' as does the original Egyptian *kherebesh* . Thus Excalibur was an Egypto-Judaic relic that may well have belonged to King David, just as the Grail legends relate.


The same may also be true of the most popular name for the Grail castle, Corbenic, the castle of the Fisher King. *⁵ The wife of the Fisher King is said to be the Lady of the Wasteland, and therefore Castle Corbenic could also be thought of as a Waste Land, even if this imagery conflicts greatly with the description of a great forest

surrounding the location. However, the etymological roots of 'Corbenic' are the same as for 'Caliburn' (Cariburn), for both rely on the consonants c-r-b-n. But instead of referring to a sword, this time the root is the Hebrew *khareb* חָרַב meaning 'desert' or 'waste land'. But since this description does not match a western British location in any form whatsoever, the intended meaning was probably *khareb* חָרַב, which refers to Mt Horeb (Khoreb). Mt Horeb is actually an alternative name for Mt Sinai, and this would have been a highly suitable name for the fortress of an Egypto-Judaic exile.

The addition to these Judaic stories of a search for the Holy Grail represents a search for the lost ancestry and descendants of Jesus, for the Grail in this early era was a reference to Mary Magdalene herself,

as we have already seen (the Grail does have other manifestations besides this). However, this melding of legends about a sacred royal bloodline of Jesus and Mary Magdalene (the Holy Grail) with King Arthur (the warrior-king) would make a great deal more sense if these Arthurian legends were based upon Jesus himself. Jesus was a warrior-king who was central to this very same sacred bloodline, and so surely it is he who should be the central character in these Grail legends. But perhaps he was the central character of these legends, and so King Arthur was simply a pseudonym for King Jesus, and therefore the original authors of the *Vulgate Cycle* did realise who their hero warrior-king was. Again, the authors were simply saving their scalps from the wrath of the Catholic

Church by using alternative names and dates, and cloaking these stories in a mythological gloss.

However, even a fearful scribe would want to keep track of the story by using a hypocorism that would have real historical meaning for the initiated, who ‘had ears to hear’, and so the name ‘Arthur’ should be relevant to Jesus’ life or ancestry in some manner. One of the common hypocorisms or nicknames for Jesus in the biblical-style texts is the ‘Egyptian False Prophet’, and if we look into the Egyptian language we find that one of the original names for Egypt was Atur (Atur-ti) . Thus, King Jesus may have simply been called the King of the Egyptians or King Atur (Arthur) in these Grail legends.

However, a later addendum has been added to this analysis of King

Arthur's title, and it is a compelling alternative to say the least. The alternative suggestion is that the name 'Arthur' was derived from the northern constellation of Ursa Major; and the reason for this constellation being closely linked to King Jesus-Izas is fully explained in the book *Mary Magdalene*. This additional chapter really does place a final seal of confirmation on this otherwise speculative connection between King Jesus-Izas and King Arthur. This explanation has been placed in this later book because it was inspired by the 6th century baptistry at Aix-en-Provence, which was being researched for that book.

Fisher King

In many of the *Vulgate Cycle's* stories

and in *Parzival* especially, the role of King Arthur is largely taken over by the mysterious Fisher King. In *Perceval*, for example, Chretien writes of the keeper of the Grail being the Fisher King, as does Wolfram von Eschenbach in *Parzival*. The *Lancelot-Grail* names this king as Pelles or Pellam, while the later version in Eschenbach's *Parzival* calls him Anfortas. So who was this mysterious Fisher King, who appears to take the role of King Arthur on numerous occasions?

Since the Fisher King is sometimes said to be the brother-in-law of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, it would seem pretty obvious that the Fisher King was a reference to King Jesus-Arthur himself. Jesus was the first Egypto-Judaic king of the new Piscean astrological era, and so he

was playfully known as the Fisher King. This is why there are so many references to Jesus acting as a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee; but, as we have already seen, in reality he was not catching fish, but converts to the concept of the new Piscean era. This is also why Simple Judaism adopted the fish as its primary symbol, even though its leaders did not fully understand its meaning.

The Fisher King in *Parzival* was also married to his sister, Repanse de Schoye, the Grail queen, just as Jesus was married to his sister, Mary Magdalene. Again, we see that the Fisher King, King Arthur and King Jesus-Izas are all inextricably linked together as one character in one great legendary tale. But these obvious links between these characters would, by necessity, again point towards a first

century AD date for these Grail legends, for Jesus was most certainly not a Dark Ages hero.

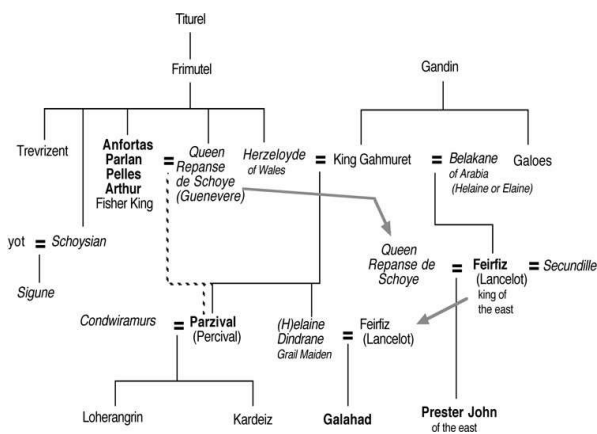


Fig 14.12 Genealogy of Parzival and Feirefiz. This genealogy also attempts to blend in some of the alternative genealogy and names from the Vulgate Cycle. However, this will never be a complete or definitive genealogy because these legends continually contradict each other with regard to names and family relationships.

In addition to this, Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* contains yet more allusions to a first century biblical foundation for these legends. Gahmuret, the father of Parzival,^{*6} becomes a knight for Baruch of Baghdad. This sounds very much like Saul-Josephus' name for his own father, which was Zacharias of Baruch. As we have seen, all of these characters came from Babylon, or Baghdad, and so Baruch of Baghdad may well have been Zacharias of Baruch. Gahmuret then marries an eastern lady, with whom he has a son, Feirefiz; he then goes to Wales to marry Parzival's mother, Herzeloyde. Here we again see this alternation between the Middle East and England in the west, just as we shall in the next chapter with the story of the exile of King Jesus-Izas.

The naive young knight, Parzival, then goes on a quest for enlightenment and arrives in a magical land called Brobarz. This is the kingdom of the Fisher King, Anfortas, who turns out to be Parzival's uncle (or father in *Quest*). The first person he meets in this land is, appropriately enough, a fisherman. But this is no ordinary fisherman, for he is said to be:

Clad in raiment rich and grand. As though he ruled over every land.⁶⁵

The notes to *Parzival* confirm that this fisherman is actually Anfortas (Pelles in *Quest*), the Fisher King himself, who is testing Parzival for his courtesy to strangers. But this reference to Anfortas being a rich and royal fisherman again links this character directly to the family of King Jesus-

Izas-Arthur, the rich Judaeo-Syrian king of 600 rebel fishermen. However, Anforas is a sad character, dressed to rule and living in a sumptuous castle, but apparently with no kingdom to rule over. This is surely a reference to a defeated King Jesus-Izas, a lonely figure, dispossessed and forgotten in some remote castle of exile.

Parzival travels to this strange and sumptuous castle of the Fisher King, which he later finds out to be the Grail Castle of Munsalvasche (Corbenic in *Quest*). Here, the guests lounge on carpets and cushions, rather than chairs or sofas, in the Eastern tradition – the tradition that was so admirably depicted in the Palmyran tombs. This Grail castle is said to be rather remote, just as we suspected, for no tree had been cut within thirty miles of this solitary location, and in *Quest* it

was said to be on the west coast of England that overlooks Ireland. In the next chapter, we shall find just such a peculiarly remote castle or fortress on the west coast of England that was constructed in this very same first century era, a castle that may well be closely linked to the exile of King Jesus-Izas-Arthur. The name 'Munsalvasche' may have been derived from 'Mount of Salvation', which may be yet another reference to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Thus 'Munsalvasche' might easily be translated as either 'Ynis Wytrin' or even 'Arimathaea', as we saw earlier. It is said that the Holy Grail resided in this castle and this multifaceted Grail is said to have been both a woman and a sacred stone, and we shall look more closely at the nature of the Holy Grail in the next two chapters.

In *Parzival*, these stories about the Fisher King are all strangely separate from, and yet parallel to, those that mention King Arthur; and prince Parzival alternates between serving the one king and then the other. As mentioned previously, it is as though two stories have been melded together, and it is up to the reader to understand that the Fisher King and King Arthur are actually one and the same person. But the Fisher King is curiously wounded and infirm, which is why he is sometimes referred to as the Wounded King, and this very specific wound will allow a further link to King Jesus-Izas to be made in the next chapter.⁶⁶

This rather sad lament of King Jesus-Izas-Arthur as the wounded Fisher King, as portrayed by Eschenbach in *Parzival*, is an image of

a defeated Jesus. He had begun the insurrection in Syrio-Judaea with the hope of taking control of the East, for times of great uncertainty like this are times in which great leaders can rise to prominence and take control of the levers of state, and thus take command of the nation. Jerusalem would have been a simple stepping-stone to the throne of Egypt and the Roman Empire itself. But the plan began to founder when the overthrow of the Jerusalem authorities degenerated into both a civil war among the Jews and a simultaneous war of independence against Rome. Having let the genie of insurrection out of the Judaic bottle, there was no longer any real control over who was fighting who or for what reason. The bid for the throne of Judaea and the Roman East had degenerated into a nightmare of epic

proportions.

As we have seen, this dramatic bid for the Imperial purple of Rome was to end in abject failure and defeat. King Jesus-Arthur was crucified, reprieved, revived and then brought before Emperor Vespasian as a wounded Fisher King. After much debate, pleading and intervention, the final decision of the new emperor was that Jesus should be exiled from Syrio-Judaea. But where does one exile a rebel Egypto-Parthian prince? The answer is as far from Egypt and Parthia as is humanly possible. We shall uncover that location in the next chapter and discover that it lies in the rolling shires of England, the counterpart of the peaceful rolling shires of Frodo Baggins.

ummary

Joseph(us) of Arimathaea was probably a pseudonym for Saul-Josephus.

Saul-Josephus had good links with England, through King Caratacus and Princess Claudia.

William Blake suggests that Jesus also came to England, in addition to Saul-Josephus of Arimathaea.

The Grail legends indicate that Jesus was crucified in AD 70.

The Grail legends have many scenes that take place in Syrio-Judaea, rather than Gaul or Britain.

The Last Supper table was round, and it was the precursor to the Arthurian Round Table.

The Round Table was probably designed as a Mappa Mundi, a depiction of the world.

The Fisher King (the Wounded King) is a pseudonym for both King Arthur and King Jesus. Both Jesus, being the Fisher of Men, and Christianity adopted the symbol of the fish.

King Arthur is a pseudonym for King Jesus-Isas, thus the Twelve Knights of the Round Table were based upon the Twelve Disciples of the Last Supper table.

*1 Arimathaea can also be translated as 'Hill of God'. Alternatively, Richard Carrier has suggested that 'Arimathaea' was derived from *ari-mathetes* αρι-μαθητης, which the *Liddell-Scott Greek Dictionary* translates as 'excellent disciple' or 'best disciple'. Such a pseudonym would have suited Saul-Josephus very nicely, as he always wanted to be the favourite disciple. This pseudonym would have evoked the position of the 'loved disciple', who is repeatedly mentioned in the Gospel of John; but there is no way that Saul-Josephus could have really been the 'loved disciple' as he was more hated than loved, and had been rejected. If the pseudonym 'Arimathaea' had indeed been derived from *ari-mathetes*, this would have been wishful thinking or perhaps nominative revenge, rather than reality.

*2 Surprisingly, the Irish Celtic word *glas* means green rather than blue. Readers who have digested the book *Scota, Egyptian Queen of the Scots* will have noticed that the Egyptian king of this story,

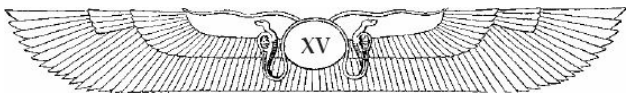
Gaythelos, was also called Glas meaning ‘green’.

*3 He was given a penectomy, as well as castration.

*4 Galahad was also said to be the name of the son (sometimes the brother) of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, which may account for this confusion. In *Quest* and *History*, the magical sword goes by the unprepossessing name of The Sword with the Strange Straps! It is not surprising that this appellation was dropped in favour of Excalibur.

*5 The name ‘Camelot’ is not used until the very end of the *Vulgate Cycle*, and may have been confused with the wrong Roman fortress. Please note also the links that were established in the book *Eden*, between a *khareb* חרב ‘sword’ and a *kereb* כרוב ‘cherub’ (or sphinx).

*6 In other Grail legends Parzival is called Perceval. In later legends he appears to morph into Gawain, or rather Gawain takes over his role.



Exile in England

Y Ddraig Goch a ddyry Gychwyn

Although Saul-Josephus of Arimathaea is strongly associated with the south west of England and more specifically with Glastonbury, there is a possibility that this is either a subsidiary or even a later association, for there is very little archaeological evidence that would point towards an Egypto-Judaic or Greco-Syrio-Judaic presence in that area. What we are looking for in this

investigation is real physical evidence, and none has ever been forthcoming in and around Glastonbury and its famous Tor.

And what of the subsequent history of King Jesus-Izas-Arthur himself? If he did indeed survive the crucifixion in AD 70, as Saul-Josephus (St Paul) suggests, then what did he do next? He was a king of the realm and a revolutionary leader, so would he have just been allowed to retire with a pipe and slippers to the coastal resort of Caesarea, to play with his grandchildren? I fear not. He was still a revolutionary figure of considerable influence, and so it would have been dangerous in the extreme for the Roman establishment to let him go, so Vespasian and Titus only had two logical options – imprison him or kill him. Death would have been the easier

option, but we shall see why that was not politically possible shortly. It was the complicated politics of the Jewish War that allowed King Jesus to be taken down from the cross and ensured that imprisonment was the only viable option. But if King Jesus-Izas-Arthur was languishing in a fetid dungeon in Judaea, then why do we get semi-mythological associations between him and Romo-Celtic Britain? Surely the Romans would not put him in a jail in Britain – would they?

The answer to these numerous questions may lie a little further north of Glastonbury, at a site that became central to the expansion of Roman Britain: Chester. This city was founded by the Romans on a patch of raised ground overlooking a curve in the River Dee, where they constructed a huge fortress called Deva (pronounced

Dewa, as in the morning dew). The modern name for Chester is said to have been derived from the Latin *castrum* meaning 'castle' or 'fort', a reference to the great fortress built there, but it is entirely possible that it was actually derived from the Latin *castro* meaning 'castration'. This interpretation would have distinct Arthurian overtones, for a nickname like *castrum castro*, the castle of the wounded (king), could be viewed as being synonymous with the castle of the wounded Fisher King who had been injured in the genitals.

Before we continue looking at this fortress and its sacred contents, perhaps we ought to have a lightning, three paragraph revision of the Roman conquest of Britain. The first Roman legions to arrive in Britain did so under the command of Julius Caesar in

55 BC, but his campaign only lasted two years and he was either obliged or forced to leave again. The oft-proposed return of the Roman legions to Britain had to wait nearly a century, until AD 43, when Emperor Claudius sent four legions to the southeast coast. The legions involved were Legion II Adiutrix, Legion IX Hispana, Legion XIV Gemina and Legion XX Valeria Victrix, and the foundations of the huge triumphal arch that they built at the landing site can still be seen at Richborough in Kent. Only three decades later, the Roman army and its standardised system of roads, forts, farms and towns were spreading far and wide throughout the new Roman province.

Strangely enough, it was Commander Vespasian, later to become Emperor Vespasian, who took

his Second Legion (Adiutrix) westwards through to modern Exeter and subdued the Celtic tribes in that region. One of those defeated kings was our old friend Caratacus, who initially fled to the Brigantes tribe of Cumbria (another tribe-name familiar from the book *Scota*). But Queen Cartimandua of the Brigantians had already struck a peace treaty with the Romans, and so she handed Caratacus over to them, which is how Caratacus and his daughter ended up in Rome being converted to Simple Judaism by Saul-Josephus. This story is composed of wheels within wheels, and so it is not beyond the realms of possibility that Saul-Josephus met Vespasian in Rome (in the mid 60s AD) during one of these fortuitous convergences of events.

Anyway, there were a few

decades of Roman consolidation in Britain until we reach the early 70s AD. Rome had overcome the madness of Nero and the year of four emperors, and had found a more promising course under the steady helmsmanship of Emperor Vespasian. The Deva Victrix (Dewa Victrix) fort at Chester was probably founded in AD 75 or 77, during Emperor Vespasian's reign. The new Roman governor of the province, Gnaeus Julius Agricola, arrived in AD 78 and major construction works at the Deva fortress were still ongoing at that time. Note that these dates are all from the era immediately after the Jewish War and the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem, a period in which Jewish exiles, captives and slaves would have been spreading far and wide across the Empire.



Fig 15.1 The entrance to a standard Roman fortress. This is the Lunt fort in Coventry, England. The Dewa fortress was constructed with stone walls, rather than the wooden palisade here at the Lunt fort.

The Roman fort at Dewa, which eventually became modern Chester, was a massive construction enclosing some 60 acres of land behind stone and wooden palisades, in the standard rectangular Roman layout. Indeed, the immense size of the fort has caused much speculation, as it was much larger than usual. Professor David

Mason says of it:

The Dewa fort was special in a number of ways: not only was it significantly larger than all the other legionary forts in Britain ... it was also provided with a defensive wall of rather unusual style.¹

This unusual defensive wall was actually constructed from massive drystone blocks, a technique known as *opus quadratum*, which was largely obsolete by this time as it was expensive and time-consuming to construct. As Professor Mason says:

This style of masonry was normally reserved for particularly prestigious constructions such as temple podia and the major gates of towns.²

The Dewa fortress was therefore special in some manner, almost as special as a temple complex in a major city. An additional oddity was that the

fort was located in a rather inaccessible location, surrounded both by marshlands, forests and the estuary of the river Dee. On a modern map of England, Chester may look like an ideal location for a city in northwest Britain, but in Roman times much of the surrounding lowlands would have been impassible, and so one wonders why such an isolated spot was chosen for Britain's largest Roman fort. Fortresses are all about commanding the surrounding hinterland and subduing the local inhabitants in the entire region, not hiding away at the extremities of a marshland; and yet this description of a castle or fortress that is 'thirty miles' from any other habitation is distinctly reminiscent of the Grail castle of Munsalvasche-Corbenic.

Location, location, location

Regarding this unusual location, one of the archaeologists on the site in Chester commented that, ‘The only possible purpose of Dewa was its access to the sea’, and this has led to the speculation that the only possible reason for such a large fort being sited in this location would be as a springboard for an invasion of Ireland. Alternatively, it could have been sited there for the importation of goods from overseas, for the resupply of armies pushing further into northern Britain. However, the Chester location was rather remote and surrounded by marshlands, whereas a similar estuary inlet slightly further north at modern Warrington pushed further inland and would have been strategically much more useful and accessible to the other legions in the country.

Whatever the reason for its remote location, the Dewa fortress at Chester was laid out on familiar lines and contained all the facilities that a battle-ready Roman legion would require, including stables, barrack accommodation, warehousing, a bathhouse, workshops, administrative buildings, and the commander's quarters. The rather peculiar thing about this fort, the thing that made it rather unusual, was that it also contained an enigmatic and centrally located elliptical building. In fact, this building and its surrounding complex appears to be the sole reason for the Dewa fortress being larger than its contemporaries. Thus, the elliptical building's presence in the fort must have been pre-planned, and it must have been a very important feature to have forced the legionnaires into so

much extra building work, for no other fortress in the Empire has anything remotely similar.

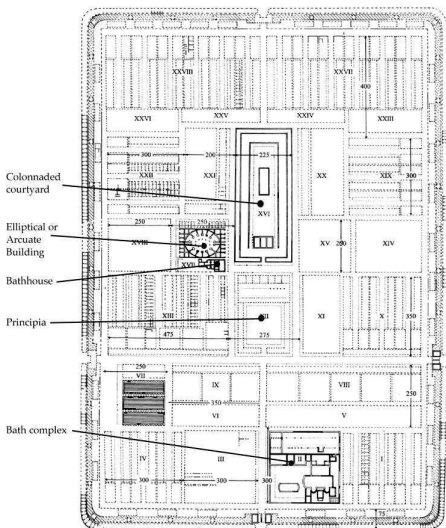


Fig 15.2 The ground plan of the Dewa Fortress, with the Arcuate (Elliptical) Building just to the left of center. (Chester Archaeology)

The term elliptical for this building is perhaps slightly misleading, as it was

actually designed as an arcuate, a design formed by the intersection of the arcs of two circles (in contrast, an ellipse has two focal points instead of one). While the term 'arcuate' might be novel to readers, I will be using this term for the building, for the time being, in order to differentiate it from Roman amphitheaters which were true elliptical buildings. Please bear in mind that all the archaeological and historical reports of the Dewa fortress still label this building as being 'elliptical', rather than 'arcuate', and so the former term will have to be used for web or library searches.

This Arcuate Building has caused a great deal of puzzlement within archaeological circles, for it is not only unique to Roman Britain, it is unique to the whole of the Roman Empire, as we shall see. So what,

readers may enquire, has this Roman building got to do with a quest for Saul-Joseph(us) of Arimathaea and King Jesus-Izas-Arthur? Well, perhaps a fuller description of the layout of the site will furnish us with a few answers.

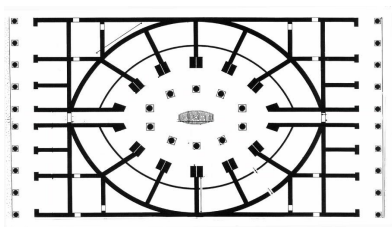


Fig 15.3 The ground plan of the Dewa Fort's Arcuate Building. (Chester Archaeology)

As has already been mentioned, construction of the Arcuate Building was begun in the late AD 70s, while Vespasian was still emperor of Rome. This is not only our primary era of

interest, but the key players in this Britannic drama are also very familiar to us. The soldiers building this fort were from the Legion II Adiutrix, Vespasian's personal legion, and no doubt the emperor kept a fatherly eye over his favourite fighting forces. Vespasian himself would have been familiar with the west of Britain, having led the Roman invasion forces there back in the 40s and 50s AD. His defeated enemy, King Caratacus and his daughter Claudia, were now in Rome and were no doubt getting on very well with Saul-Josephus, who had been promoted to the positions of Roman commander, university dean, historian, leader of Simple Judaism, high priest of Judaea and emperor's favorite yes-man. Since Claudia's son, Linus, had become the second bishop of Simple Judaism in Rome, they and

Saul-Josephus would have had a lot to talk about and muse over. Thus Vespasian, Caratacus and now Saul-Josephus would have all been rather familiar with the many fantastic tales that sprung from the verdant Britannic lands in the far northwest of the Empire.

This strange Arcuate Building within the Dewa fortress was one of the most important constructions on the site, as the locations of each subdivision within these Roman forts were both standardised and highly significant in terms of rank and hierarchy. The Arcuate Building was positioned at the center of the fort, which makes its position highly prestigious. The Arcuate Building was also one of the very few buildings in the fort to have been built in finely dressed stone, when even the

commander's accommodation appears to have been fabricated in wood, which again makes it highly significant. In fact, the quality of this finely dressed stonework would suggest that this was *the* most important building on the entire site – the most important building in the largest fortress in the entire country of Britannia (in fact, the Dewa fort was probably the largest frontier fort in the Empire). Professor Mason says of this highly unusual building:

It is obvious that there was something unusual about the fortress at Chester, and it is clear that that 'something' was bound up with the group of buildings which included the Elliptical Building in the central zone of its interior ... one is drawn to the conclusion that the impetus for its inclusion (in the fortress) can only have come from the highest level of the military command.³

Agreed. The Arcuate Building was

highly unusual and not very Roman, and it was Vespasian who ordered its construction, as we shall see. It was also quite large, measuring some 60×30 meters, and as we have already seen it was purposely designed in the shape of a perfect arcuate, or double arc, a design that is so unusual that nobody has ever worked out what it was intended to be. The center of the building contained an open arcuate courtyard and in the center of this courtyard there appears to have been an ornamental fountain of some description. This feature is reasonably certain, as the foundations of the water-feature have been found and a length of rather expensive lead piping, which would have fed the fountain, was discovered still in *situ*. The pipework was embossed with the name of Vespasian Caesar and the continued

inscription further positively dates its fabrication to AD 79. It is probable that this pipework was specially commissioned for the Arcuate Building and so the construction date for this part of the building can be positively given as AD 79-80 (the pipework runs around the foundations, so could have been laid while construction was still in progress).

Around the perimeter of the courtyard, the Arcuate Building was divided up into twelve imposing alcoves, which were fronted either side by large and imposing columns. The sheer scale of the concrete foundations for these columns means that this was a building whose primary function was to impress. In addition, the building had its own bathhouse, separate from the fortress' main bathhouse; a feature that may

eventually lead us to a definitive conclusion as to who commissioned this complex.

The possibility that this building was rather special has already been hinted at, but what kind of building could this have been? In the excavation report on the site, Professor David Mason runs through a few possibilities:

Palace (*praetorium*)

While the Arcuate Building is highly prestigious, and includes a bath complex, it is not laid out as a functioning palace or mansion: the room layout is simply not livable. In addition, the fortress already contained a *praetorium* for the base commander and had no need

of another.

Theater (*theatrum*)

The Arcuate Building was originally designated as a theatre or amphitheater, until the other half of it was uncovered and it was discovered to be rather too small. The actual layout would resemble a lecture hall for biological dissections, where the viewers have to be close to the action to observe the procedures, rather than a standard theater or amphitheater. Besides, the longitudinal walls that would have to support the seating are simply not robust enough for that purpose, and

amphitheaters were always located outside forts and not in prominent positions within them. In fact, Dewa already had an amphitheater located just to the east of the fort.

Officers' club (*schola*)

While the separate bathhouse may point towards an officers' complex, this kind of elitism was not a feature of any other Roman fort. In addition, the layout does not appear to be right, for there are no rooms as such, just alcoves. Besides, it is unlikely that the base commander would allow an officers' club that was more prestigious than his own

accommodation.

Market (*macellum*)

Although the general layout might be considered similar to Roman markets, with alcoves for each trader, a market place would not be the most prestigious building in the Dewa fortress. Nor would a market require a separate bathhouse. Besides, this was an army camp, not a village, and army camps simply did not house markets.

Temple to the great gods (*Augusteum*)

Now this sounds rather more plausible. There were said to be twelve primary gods in the Roman pantheon and so

an ideal pantheon would have twelve alcoves (although the magnificent Pantheon in Rome had only eight). This function would also agree with the solemnity of this structure, which Professor Mason describes as:

... the brief for the architect was for the creation of a structure which provided a calm and tranquil environment totally divorced from the noisy conditions outside, where there was opportunity for a pleasant stroll, reflective contemplation and / or intellectual discussion ... it would seem that the intention was to allow the visitor to view and perhaps admire the contents (of each alcove), but also ensure that he maintained a respectful distance.⁴

But what was this temple dedicated to? Which of the Roman gods demanded an arcuate temple? An ingenious suggestion from the Dewa archaeologists is that the temple may have been an *imago mundi* or an *imago orbis terrarium*, a map of the known world. The Mappa Mundi in Hereford Cathedral is round, because that is how early Christianity imagined the world, with Jerusalem at its center. However, the Greek and Roman concept of the known world was often elliptical (arcuate?), because the Mediterranean and its surrounding nations formed an elliptical shape. This is

an interesting suggestion, bearing in mind the possible purpose of the Arthurian Round Table, as was discussed in the previous chapter. However, the provision of a fountain together with a map seems unlikely, unless the map was carved from stone and the fountain filled the Mediterranean.

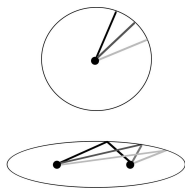
There are other problems with this map scenario and these include the uniqueness of the Dewa Arcuate Building's design, the provision of a separate bathhouse, the temple's situation inside a fort and the remoteness of this fort's location. One would have

thought that a grand map of the Empire or a grand temple dedicated to the twelve gods would have been constructed in Rome, and not the remotest fortress in the entire Empire. Besides, Roman fortresses did not contain temples, so why was a prestigious temple to the gods located at the center of this one?

Amphitheater (*amphitheatrum*)

The only other building in the Empire of this design is said, in the Dewa report, to be the ‘Petite Amphitheater’ which now lies under Rue de la Paix in the town of Metz (Divodurum) in eastern France. But this construction

is larger, rather more robust to carry the weight of the terraces above, does not have twelve divisions, and more importantly does not have the symmetry nor the precision of the Dewa building (the plan for the Metz amphitheater in the Dewa report is stylized and not accurate). In fact, the Metz elliptical amphitheater is actually an egg-shaped amphitheater, and it was definitely designed to accommodate an audience.



Fig

*15.4 Construction
of a circle
and an
ellipse.*

Although the Arcuate Building at Dewa cannot be an amphitheater, due to its lack of seating; its small size; its location in a fort; and an amphitheater being located outside that same fort, there is no doubting a superficial similarity in design. However, as has already been mentioned, the standard Roman amphitheater, as typified by the Colosseum in Rome, is a true ellipse, and not an arcuate. A simple arc has one focal point, whereas a true ellipse has two. (A

loose piece of string around two pegs will form an ellipse, if the string is made tight with a pencil and the pencil scribed around its limits of its travel.) So the Dewa Arcuate Building is utterly unique, and in the words of one archaeologist:

No other building (of this type) is known anywhere in the Roman world.⁵

As an aside, Mark Wilson-Jones and Gilbert Hallier, in their comprehensive books on Roman amphitheaters, maintain that the Colosseum was laid out as a four-centered oval – an oval shape made up of four segments of different length

arcs. In contrast, my own analysis of the Colosseum shows three different length arcs, not four, as can be seen in [fig 15.6](#). However, on plans of the Colosseum up to a meter wide, I can still make a true ellipse conform exactly to the outline of the arena. So the outline of the Colosseum may still have been formed from a true ellipse, but the seating plan was laid out using three focal points to simplify the viewing lines for the audience, to ensure that everyone could see the arena clearly.

What we have at Dewa, then, is a building that is utterly unique within

the Roman Empire. But this is peculiar, for it strongly implies that this unique building was not Roman: that it came from another culture or another creed. Yet, for some very peculiar reason, this unique and apparently foreign building was designed and constructed at the very edge of the empire and in the center of a Roman military fort, which is all very peculiar.

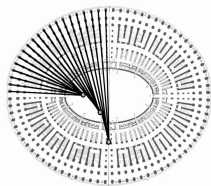
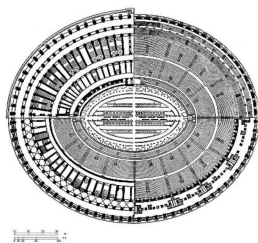


Fig 15.5 Layout of the Colosseum in Rome. (top)

Fig 15.6 Seating-plan of the Colosseum. (bottom)

The best guess from the list of options

just given, is that the Arcuate Building was actually an arcuate temple. However, like the amphitheaters used by the military, army temples were always placed outside the fort to save on precious space. The only items inside a fort were those that were necessary for its protection and the protection of the soldiers within it. Water, provisions, soldiers, workshops, hospitals and the headquarters were all critical items and were located within the fort. Even the bathhouse was considered to be a critical facility, if disease was to be kept at bay during a siege, and was located inside the fortress. However, an amphitheater or a temple was not strictly necessary, militarily, and was located outside the fort. So why was the arcuate temple housed inside the Dewa fort? Was it for the temple's

protection, because it was incredibly special? Or, conversely, was it inside a fortification to prevent the priests from absconding? The latter might seem like an odd reason, but bear with me a while on this one.

So are we any closer to a resolution? If readers are still a little baffled as to why a very special and possibly foreign temple was constructed in a Roman fortress in a damp and windy location on the very edge of the Empire, and why this temple should be of interest to this investigation, perhaps the term 'arcuate' should be investigated further. Actually, there is another more popular name for such a design and that is the rather more famous image of the Vesica Piscis.

For readers who are unfamiliar with the concept of the Vesica Piscis,

the Latin term for this shape literally means ‘fish bladder’*¹ and the fishlike shape of this kind of arcuate is intimately connected with the constellation of Pisces. A true Vesica Piscis has the perimeter of one circle just touching the center of the other, and if this happens the width of the ellipse (the width of the fish) is $1/2$ of the circle’s diameter.

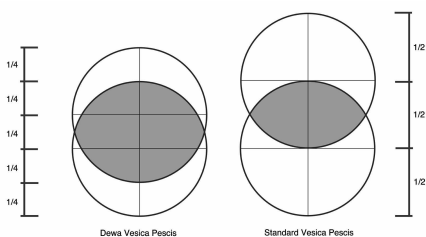


Fig 15.7 The creation of a Vesica Piscis.

However, this formula makes for a rather slim, fishlike shape, which is not necessarily very appropriate for a

temple that has to accommodate a number of artifacts and people. Aware of this, the Dewa Fort's architect has made the fish-shape fatter, by pushing the two circles closer together. But this was not done in any old random fashion, it was specifically achieved by making the perimeter of one circle intersect exactly half way between the other circle's center and its perimeter. Thus the distance between each of the perimeters and center points of both of these circles have been arranged to be exactly $1/4$ of a diameter apart, and so the width of this particular fish-shaped Vesica Piscis is exactly $3/4$ of the diameter of the two circles (instead of $1/2$).

Thus the shape of the Dewa Arcuate Temple is most definitely based upon the Vesica Piscis and therefore the building itself must have

been inextricably linked to the constellation of Pisces and to the Near Eastern religions that venerated astrology. However, the fact that this elliptical building was also subdivided into twelve alcoves would strongly suggest that it was a temple dedicated not just to the constellation of Pisces, but also to the other twelve signs of the zodiac. If so, then it is highly likely that each cell within this temple housed an image of one of the astrological symbols. In other words, a much more descriptive title for this temple would be the Temple of the Zodiac.

However, these alcoves were not intended to be twelve astrological rooms, as such, for it would appear that the individual cells had no doors. Instead, the entrance to each alcove was graced by a huge archway resting on mighty pillars, each located on

solid concrete foundations; and so each of the astrological symbols would have been visible from the temple's courtyard but protected by a low wall. See the colour section for an artist's impression of the building's interior.

As the artist's impressions demonstrate, at the center of this Temple there must also have been a monument of some kind. This is known for certain, because that monument required substantial foundations:

At the heart of the building, positioned at the exact center of the courtyard, was a foundation measuring about 1.5×1.8 m, clearly designed to serve as the base of some kind of monument.⁶

We know that the central monument also included a water feature, as a substantial and very expensive lead pipe ran from the temple's exterior to its very center. In fact, the provision of

this water pipe was a very expensive addition to the temple, for the source of the spring water for the fort lies a full meter below the level of the Temple of the Zodiac, and so a method of raising the water would have been required. It has been suggested that the pressure of the spring was used to raise the water, a technique the Romans had used at other forts and cities, but if so, the pressure in the pipes would have been quite large. The water was drawn from Boughton, which lies about a kilometer to the east, and was piped in ceramic pipes to the east gate of the fort. This was probably a sensible precaution, as any uncivilised attacking hoards may not realise that the fort's precious water supply was flowing merrily under their feet. However, the lowest point in the water supply to the Temple of the Zodiac would have been 12 or

so meters below the fountain-top, depending on the height the water in the fountain was required to reach, which is quite a pressure to withstand.

The alternative would have been to let the water flow under a greatly reduced pressure to the east gate of the fort, which lies seven meters below the level of the Temple of the Zodiac, where it would discharge into a large cistern (the ceramic pipe ran two meters under ground level all the way to the fort, so the pressure would be manageable). The water would then have to be raised manually from the cistern and into a water tower, to provide adequate pressure for the lead pipe that fed the fountain. As can be readily appreciated, whatever method was used, the addition of piped water to this temple was a great technical feat and a huge additional cost.

This expensive pipework was not simply for an ornamental pool in the center of the temple, which was the central feature of Egyptian and Roman houses, for such a feature could have been topped up by buckets. In addition, the foundations at the center of the temple were deep and robust and so the central monument must have been substantial and heavy. Under the circumstances, the archaeologist's illustration, showing an ornamental fountain fed by a pressurised lead pipe, seems logical, for what else could have been in that position? Actually, what should be in the center of any self-respecting temple in this era is an image of the god, not an ornamental fountain. The whole purpose of a temple was to honour a god, and each and every Egypto-Greco-Roman temple followed that

same pattern. The probable form and nature of the god-figure in the Dewa Temple of the Zodiac will be explored shortly.

However, despite its remote location in a military camp at the edge of the Empire, clearly the primary intention of this temple was to impress – it was less of a church and more like an imposing cathedral. In fact, this same type of design still exists in Christian cathedrals. In most cathedrals, if one walks to the side of the choir and sanctuary (where the choir and altar reside) a lower-ceilinged corridor will be found which curves around and behind the sanctuary. All along this corridor there are likely to be small apses containing small altars, shrines and images of the saints (in Catholic cathedrals) residing behind low walls. The function of the

Temple of the Zodiac was probably rather similar: to display the images of the zodiac to the one or two privileged people who could gain access through those slit-like entrance-ways. So what was this temple, dedicated to the signs of the zodiac, doing in the center of a fort at the very edge of the known world? Was it really there because it was so special, so unique, that it needed military protection?

Sacred measures

The suggestion that the Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa is a temple is quite a revelation in itself, for archaeologists have been singularly unable to decipher this building's function up until now; but nevertheless, we are only just beginning the process of uncovering the full possibilities here.

The first question to ponder is what faction or religion, within the Roman army, would have required a temple dedicated to the zodiac?

While we might think that the zodiac was a primary feature of Greek culture and mythology, it was also a central feature of Judaism. As was shown in previous chapters, many Jewish synagogues and palaces housed a prominent mosaic of a zodiac, as did the palace of Herod Archelous at Hamat Teverya near Tiberias, the very same palace that Saul-Josephus tried to destroy. However, since Judaic culture is older than Greek culture, and the zodiac most probably originated in the Egypt of Joseph and Moses, the zodiac was most probably Judaic long before the Greeks even began to develop a civilisation. However, although Rome adopted astrology and the zodiac very

early on in its development, the zodiac was largely subordinate to the state gods and is not readily visible in Roman iconography.

Mithras held elements of precessional astrology, and undoubtedly Mithra the bull-slayer was simply another manifestation of Gilgamesh the bull-slayer. However, I have already identified Gilgamesh as being an image of Orion, and the drama of slaying the bull (of heaven) as being the end of the age of Taurus in 1800 BC. In other words, the cult of Mithras was supremely out of date by the Roman era (they should have been venerating the last days of a sheep-slayer and the rise of the fish-catcher, as were the Galilean-Nazarene), and so Mithras was most certainly not an occult Roman center of astrological knowledge. All of this would tend to

suggest that the primary source of astrological knowledge within the Roman Empire was actually Egypto-Judaic in origin, rather than Romo-Greek. So if we want to look for the origins of a temple dedicated to the zodiac, we should be looking for influences within the Roman military that came from its far east, from the lands of Egypt and Syrio-Judaea.

Confirmation of this hypothesis is to be found in the very fabric of the Temple of the Zodiac, within its metrology and dimensions. The archaeologists on site have tried to fit the Roman measurement units of the *pes monetalis* (pm) of 29.5 cm or the *pes drusianus* (pd) of 33 cm into the dimensions of the Temple of the Zodiac, and neither seem to fit that well. They have claimed that the external dimension of the elliptical

portion of the building conforms to exactly 100 pd, but it is actually 25 cm short of this; and besides it is unlikely that the external dimension was the most important here. The external surface was relatively rough, while the internal surface would have been smoothed with plaster and pristine, and if any sacred dimension were to be involved it would be the internal dimension that mattered – as has been demonstrated with the Irish and Scottish brochs and the dimensions of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. (See the book *Scota* for details.)

The reason that the archaeologists on site could not deduce a precise measurement system for the Temple of the Zodiac is that it was not designed in Roman units. In fact, it was designed using the Egyptian royal cubit, a cubit length that I have

previously renamed as the Thoth cubit (tc), after the Egyptian god of language and mathematics. Being an arcuate building, the most important length used in its creation would have been the diameter of the layout-circles (the arcs) that the architect used to form this sacred Piscean shape, and if one carefully measures the width of the arcuate enclosure in the building it can be seen to be exactly 31.45 m. Now the Thoth cubit measures 52.4 cm, and so this width resolves into exactly 60 tc. However, the width of the Temple of the Zodiac represents only $\frac{3}{4}$ of the diameter of the circle (the arc) that created this shape, and so the diameter of the layout-circles being used was 80 tc and their radius 40 tc.

Readers may suspect that I am trying to stretch the data here, to find such a convenient link back to Egypt

and therefore to the Egyptian heritage of the Egypto-Judaic king called Jesus. However, the proof for this extraordinary claim, that the Temple of the Zodiac had an Egypto-Judaic heritage, is to be found in the width of the building. If one measures the entire width of the building, including the gable apses, it will be seen to measure exactly 52.4 meters. This length resolves not into Roman units of measure, as the archaeologists expected, but to exactly 100 tc. Again we see that the entire edifice was built in Egyptian units of measure, the same units of measure that were used in the Temple of Bel in Palmyra.

The results are seemingly irrefutable: the Temple of the Zodiac was designed and constructed in Egyptian Thoth cubits and the measurements used were all whole

numbers.

Element	Measurement
Diameter of the layout-circles	80 tc
Width of arcuate enclosure	60 tc
Length of entire building	100 tc
Church of the Holy Sepulchre	40 tc (diameter of dome)
(All measurements are whole numbers to the nearest four centimeters.)	

It is worth reiterating that these tidy whole numbers can only appear if one is using the Egyptian Thoth cubit, not the Greek or Roman cubit – and so the

Temple of the Zodiac was positively designed by someone who was deeply immersed in Egyptian mathematics, metrology and theology. Significantly, the Bible itself used Thoth cubits, as is made clear in the Book of Ezekiel, where the altar in the Temple was being described:

And these are the measures of the altar in cubits: (the cubit being a cubit and a hand's measure) its hollow base is a cubit high and a cubit wide, and it has an overhanging edge as wide as a hand-stretch all round it.^{B7}

The cubit that measures 'a cubit plus a hand' is the Egyptian Thoth cubit, which measures seven hands instead of the normal six. Therefore, it is clear that this Egyptian measurement system was handed down to the Judaic priests who composed the Torah. This is because the Judaic priests, like Joseph and Moses, were Egyptians

themselves, but this is another story. But these same Egypto-Judaic measurement units were also passed down into the Church of Simple Judaism and it is for this reason that the diameter of the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem was deliberately designed to be exactly 40 Thoth cubits.

The whole business of the constellation of Pisces becoming dominant in AD 10, and King Jesus-Izas-Arthur being closely associated with fish symbolism, is related to the precession of the equinox. As we have already seen, the Earth wobbles on its axis like a spinning top, and this wobble makes the rising constellation at the vernal (spring) equinox change over the years. One cycle of precession takes some 25,800 years, and since there are twelve

constellations to pass through during one cycle, then each constellation is dominant for about 2,150 years (depending on its size). This change between constellations every two millennia or so is such an important event that the year-count was zeroed at that time, which is why we count our years from the beginning of the Piscean era (not from the birth of Jesus, as is often assumed).

As I have said, the fundamental reason for creating the Temple of the Zodiac was to celebrate precession and its movement into the era of Pisces. However, one of the most central periods of time that is used to calculate precession is 71.6 years, which is the time taken for the Earth to precess one degree on its axis. Thus the number 72 has become used in many odd locations, to denote a

person's knowledge of precession. A good example of this would be Gaythelos, the prince of Egypt who appears in *Scotichronicon*, the ancient chronicles of the Scots. For no apparent reason, Gaythelos is said to have spoken 72 languages, which would appear to be an utterly nonsensical assertion, until one understands the symbolism of precession.

King Jesus' appointment of another 72 disciples*² in Luke 10:1 is another such allusion to the precession rate. Thus Jesus was using 12 disciples to mimic the number of constellations, and 72 other disciples to mimic the precession rate of the Earth, and so it can be clearly seen that the Galilean Sect was fully conversant with and firmly based upon astrological principles, just as was the Temple of

the Zodiac at Dewa.

Sacred numbers

But it is not simply the width of the Temple of the Zodiac that is important here, it is the shape and size of the Vesica Piscis and the layout-circles that created them. The radius of those circles was 40 tc, as has been shown. Now the number 40 is not only a satisfactory-looking whole number, it is also a special and sacred number; and if one scans the Bible it will be obvious that the number 40 has been used in many special locations – be it the age of the kings and judges, the length of their reigns or the number of years and days spent by Moses and Jesus in the wilderness. The reason for this emphasis on the number 40, as I have already demonstrated in the book

Tempest, is that it was intimately linked to the dimensions of the Great Pyramid, which is demonstrably a 40-times copy of the Pi ratio of 22 : 7. To link yourself in some manner to the number 40, was to demonstrate that you have been initiated into the secrets of Egyptian mathematics and the design of the sacred pyramids of Egypt.

With the number 40 being such a sacred number, we therefore see this number of units, often expressed in equally sacred Egyptian Thoth cubits, being used in religious buildings – as it is in the diameter of the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. However, here at Dewa we see the same dimensions in use in a much earlier structure than the Holy Sepulchre, which dates from the fourth century AD. But such a close similarity in the design of this sacred temple must

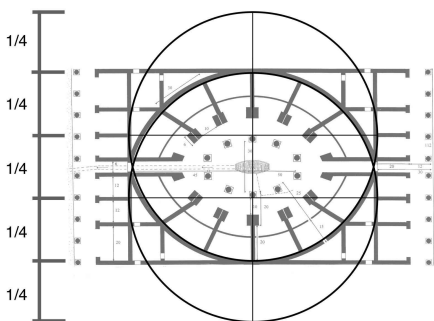
surely stem from a close similarity in belief and heritage, and so the Temple of the Zodiac must surely have an Egypto-Judaeo-Christian heritage rather than being a part of the Greco-Roman belief systems that were widely used within the Empire in this era. If this argument is correct, then we appear to have a small element of the Egypto-Judaeo-Christian religious belief system standing incongruously within a Roman fort in Britain, in an era that long predated the rise of Christianity within the Empire. The Temple of the Zodiac may therefore be the first Judaeo-Christian (or Judaeo-Galilean-Nazarene) church in Britain, indeed the first within the whole of Europe.

While this assessment may raise an eyebrow or two, there is further confirmation to be found in the

symbolism of the Vesica Piscis; for this symbol became central to Saul-Josephus' Church of Simple Judaism, or Christianity. The symbol of the fish became synonymous with King Jesus-Arthur because he was the senior royal of Judaeo-Egypt at the precise time when the precessional constellation of Aries ceded to Pisces, and these were the very cultures that venerated the precessional zodiac most strongly.

Although Simple Judaism disliked the veneration of astrology, perhaps because Saul-Josephus did not understand its full implications, his fledging Church nevertheless picked up the Vesica Piscis design as one of its primary symbols. It is still paraded around in the modern world as a pretentious bumper-sticker, by some of the more evangelical Christians. Interestingly enough, the Jews who

survived the trauma of the destruction of Jerusalem also appear to have lost their previous interest in astrology, which would not be too surprising given that the architect of both of these belief systems was Johanan-Saul-Josephus.*³ The Vesica Piscis does appear in Cabalistic and Pythagorean thought, as the flower of life, and occasionally within Buddhist iconography; but it is a fact that the greatest usage of the Vesica Piscis is to be found within Masonry and Christianity.



*Fig 15.8 Temple of the Zodiac, overlaid
with the design of the Vesica Piscis.
(Chester Archaeology)*

Since the Vesica Piscis is a representation of the constellation of Pisces, and because King Jesus was born just as the precessional era of Pisces dawned, it was only natural that the Piscean arcuate design would become the primary symbol of Saul-Josephus' Simple Judaism. However, the symbology of the arcuate goes rather deeper than this, for the Vesica Piscis can also be seen as a symbol of fertility, because the shape of the arcuate strongly resembles the outline of a woman's genitals. Thus, when Renaissance artists painted images of Jesus surrounded by the Vesica Piscis, they were actually drawing images of Jesus being born. This was also possibly seen as a symbol of the

Hieros Gamos, the Sacred Sexual Marriage.



Fig 15.9 The Vesica Piscis as a symbol of Christianity.

While this imagery may initially appear rather crude, with an image of Jesus appearing inside the symbolic genital lips of a woman, I don't

think that this was the true imagery that was intended here. The Vesica Piscis was also a representation of the constellation of Pisces, as we have seen, and so the true symbolism of these Renaissance paintings is actually one of Jesus being born in the era of Pisces. See the colour section and [fig 15.10](#) for an image of Jesus within the Vesica Piscis.

However, this fish symbolism

belonged to the Galilean Sect long before Simple Judaism picked it up, and it is for this reason that this fish symbolism became such a central theme of the Grail stories. As we saw in the last chapter, the Fisher King was simply a pseudonym for King Jesus, because he was the first Egypto-Judaean king of the new era of Pisces.

Confirmation of this can be seen in the wounds that the Fisher King received. These were pointedly said to be in his groin or genitals, and they made him infirm and powerless. My initial thought was that this has to be another reference to (and a criticism of) circumcision. Remember that the primary dispute that Saul-Josephus of Arimathaea had with the Galilean Sect was over the necessity of circumcision: for the Galileans it was sacrosanct while for Saul-Josephus it

was unnecessary and a bizarre totem that he subjected to continual ridicule. The genital wounds of the Fisher King may well have been a further extension of that ridicule. But, as we shall see later, the Fisher King's wounds may have been even greater than this.

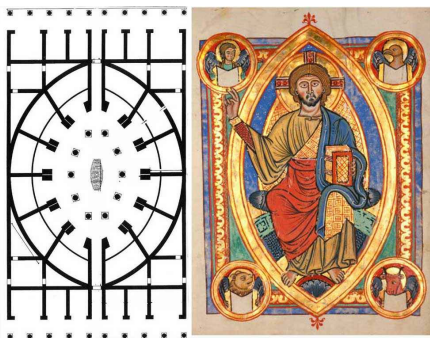


Fig 15.10 The Vesica Piscis foundations for the Temple of the Zodiac, and an image of Jesus inside the Vesica Piscis. Clearly, the Galilean Church of Jesus was intimately linked to this Piscean symbolism. Note that Jesus' navel lies in the very center of the Vesica Piscis, and so the center of the Temple of the Zodiac should also be

linked to this same navel – the Navel of the Universe. This will become important in the next chapter.

Room layout

The exact layout of the rooms inside the Temple of the Zodiac is probably not the most important piece of information or evidence to be found, but their design is interesting enough. In fact, the prime reason for looking at them at all is the comment made by the archaeologists, who derided the temple's artisans for their poor workmanship in laying out the rooms incorrectly. However, this was a prestige building employing some of the Empire's best architects, and it is unlikely that they could spend so much time on this intricate design and then lay the foundations for the rooms while

drunk. While it is true that the divisions between the rooms are not symmetrical, when it would appear that they should be, perhaps there was a reason for that asymmetry. The fact that the rooms were deliberately designed in this fashion can be best seen in this table of angles of the dividing walls, taken from the center of the layout circles, and the measurements along the interior wall of the temple that this angle provides.

Northern arc	Angle (°)	Dist (tc)	Sout a1
Room 1	27	18.75	Room 1
Room 2	24	16.75	Room 1
Room 3	20	14	Room 1
Room 4	20	14	Room 1
Room 5	24	16.75	Room 1
Room 6	27	18.75	Room 1

As can be seen, although the rooms are not all the same size, there is an undeniable symmetry to the 'back-wall' width of each room. It is difficult to say whether the angles or the lengths were the more important here, but on balance the angles give the greatest whole-number symmetry.*⁴ In addition to this, the dividing walls of each room either point towards the center of the temple, or to a point just north of the center, as the following diagrams demonstrate.

It is difficult to say exactly why the layout was done in this fashion. I had hoped that the variation in room width equated to the variation in the width of each constellation of the zodiac, but this was not apparent in the data available. I then hoped that extensions of each wall might form a recognisable pattern, but none became

visible. The only thing that we can say is that the walls pointed at two important locations in the temple. The center of the temple was obviously important as it contained the central monument and its associated water feature. But what of the point to the north of the center – why was this deemed to be important too?

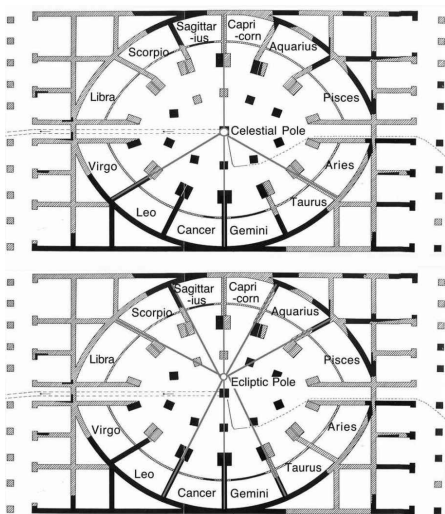


Fig 15.11 Layout of the rooms inside the Temple of the Zodiac. (Chester Archaeology)

Partition walls pointing to the center of the temple (above)

Partition walls pointing to the north of the center of the temple (below)

The obvious solution to this would be the adjacent poles that we have in the northern and southern skies: the ecliptic pole and the celestial pole. It is likely that the central point would be the celestial pole (the Earth's pole) as this is what an astronomer sees as being the central celestial point in the night sky, while the ecliptic pole (the Sun's pole) appears to be a lesser pole. If we look at a planisphere for the first century era, which is orientated in exactly this same fashion, the relative positions of the constellations will be as follows:

Northern arc, left to right

Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn,
Aquarius, Pisces

Southern arc, left to right

Virgo, Leo, Cancer, Gemini, Taurus, Aries.

Note, in [fig 15.10](#), how the constellations of Pisces and Aries are divided by the eastern entrance-way. This entrance-way therefore marks the line of the vernal point, the line of the spring equinox sunrise, which did indeed rise between Aries and Pisces in this first century era. This was the very event that the Galilean Sect was marking and which prompted the Star Prophecy: the change between the veneration of lambs and shepherds (Aries) to the veneration of fish and fishermen (Pisces).

This change in the constellations – the start of a new Great Month – is always seen as a momentous event

within astrology as it occurs so rarely (every 2,150 years or so), and this first century change from Aries to Pisces was to be no exception. However, this appears to be what the eastern entranceway to the Temple of the Zodiac was marking, the division between Aries and Pisces in the eastern sky.

Architect

All of this information and speculation culminates in a rather intriguing and momentous question: which individual within the Roman aristocracy would have required a Vesica Piscis temple dedicated to the zodiac and had the seniority to have one constructed? And why have it constructed in such an obscure and deliberately remote position at the northwestern edge of the

Empire?

What we appear to be looking for is a powerful individual, possibly associated with the Roman military, who had spent a great deal of time in the Empire's eastern provinces and had absorbed a great deal of Egypto-Judaic culture, astrology and numerology. Such an individual would have to have been powerful enough to dictate that the Dewa fortress was to be the largest and most prestigious frontier fortress in the Empire, but marginal enough to have been exiled to a remote corner of that same Empire. Tellingly, perhaps, that individual would also need to be sufficiently separatist to dictate that the temple had its own bathing facilities, so that the temple priesthood or congregation did not mix with ordinary Roman soldiers and commanders. There are a few possibilities that may

fit these requirements, which need more exploration.

Vespasian. There have been strong hints along the way in this book that Saul-Josephus managed to convert either Vespasian or his son Titus to Simple Judaism. It is possible, therefore, that Emperor Vespasian himself may have absorbed enough Eastern mysticism to have ordered the construction of an elliptical, twelve-celled temple dedicated to Pisces and the zodiac. However, the location of this temple, in a fortress above a windy and wet marshland in the furthest northwestern corner of the Empire, would tend to make this suggestion unlikely.

Although Vespasian had once been a military commander in Britain, and led the relevant Second Legion

who were involved in the construction of Dewa, surely upon becoming emperor he would have built this very important temple to astrology and the creation of the world in Rome, alongside his magnificent Colosseum. Why would he hide it away on the fringes of his empire? Why place it in a military fort instead of in a city, and why use Egyptian instead of Roman units of measure? On balance, while Vespasian's links with England and with the Second Legion are interesting, this particular suggestion brings with it too many unanswered questions.

Saul-Josephus. A more intriguing character might be Johanan-Saul-Josephus himself. It is highly likely that Saul-Josephus visited England, in the guise of Joseph(us) of Arimathaea, and so he was in the right location at exactly the right time. Remember that

in the new chronology being forged in this book, Joseph(us) of Arimathaea visited England after the fall of Jerusalem and this era would suit the construction date of Dewa rather well. Saul-Josephus was also promoted to the position of a Roman army commander, as his expedition to Tekoa, south of Jerusalem, amply demonstrates, and so he could well have been a commander of troops in England. I would doubt if Vespasian would ever trust the slimy, egotistical Saul-Josephus with a significant number of troops, but he could still have been closely linked to a legion and used that opportunity for yet more evangelism for Simple Judaism. This might be even more likely if Saul-Josephus had become a good friend of King Caratacus, as the former could have provided the eyes and ears for the

Emperor, to ensure that this new client-king adhered to the *Pax Romana* (if Vespasian could ever trust Saul-Josephus, of course).

However, while this chronology and geography appears more than satisfactory, the theology involved in this link is not quite so convincing. Although Saul-Josephus adopted the Vesica Piscis as a symbol for Simple Judaism, he does not appear to have been terribly enamoured with the signs of the zodiac themselves. Remember that it was Saul-Josephus who was sent to destroy the zodiac in the palace of Herod (Archelous) at Hamat Teverya near Tiberias, and so unless he had had a complete change of heart, it is highly unlikely that he would then have been responsible for building a temple to the zodiac in Britain. This is why we see no astrology within the

New Testament and within Christianity today. Although Saul-Josephus wrote about Egypto-Judaic iconography and astrology in his *Antiquities*, he appears to have been dedicated to wresting Judaism from its Egyptian roots, and therefore any veneration of the zodiac had to be expunged from his budding new creed.

The only other alternative, which would allow Saul-Josephus of Arimathaea to be associated with the Temple of the Zodiac, is that the twelve alcoves in this building were actually dedicated to the twelve disciples, rather than the twelve signs of the zodiac (although in reality the one was based upon the other). So the building may have housed an elliptical (rather than round) table for the twelve knights (disciples) of the round (elliptical) table, just as the Grail

stories relate, with Saul-Josephus of Arimathaea at the head of this table. Perhaps it was from this building that the rumours of King Arthur's Round Table emanated.

Having said all this, the temple itself is thought to have been open to the skies, and so it would make a very poor dining-room. Then there is a further problem in that the Temple of the Zodiac was made using Egyptian measurements and mathematics. While Saul-Josephus may have been a master of intrigue, deception, guile, duplicity and subterfuge, and while he may have been able to write reams and reams of historical facts and figures, he does not appear to have had a great mathematical bent. Nor does he appear to have been interested in Egyptian metrology or anything remotely to do with Egypt. The undoubted Egyptian

ancestry of the Temple of the Zodiac is unlike anything that Saul-Josephus had alluded or admitted to in any of his copious jottings.

The remote location of this fortress is also a bit of a problem. Unless he had been sent there as a Roman army commander, with no latitude for special requests and exceptions, Saul-Josephus of Arimathaea would not have been seen dead in Dewa. Here was a man who was the personal confidante and fortune-teller of the Emperor, a man who had been given a complete university and had assumed the role of high priest of all Judaea – the high priest of both Simple Judaism and modern Judaism. Saul-Josephus-Johanan was in the business of evangelising his new religion(s) around the major metropolises of

Europe, not hiding away in the most inaccessible location on the fringes of the Empire. It is unlikely in the extreme that such an influential and inordinately wealthy man could be bottled up in a fort on the edge of the Empire, and so the chances of Saul-Josephus commissioning the Temple to the Zodiac are slim to non-existent.

Jesus-Izas. The third possibility is that King Jesus-Izas-Arthur built the Temple of the Zodiac. The evidence so far conclusively points towards an Egypto-Judaic heritage for both the Galilean Sect and for Jesus-Izas himself, and so a likely candidate for the construction of any temple that used Egyptian measurements and Egypto-Judaic astrological symbology would be Jesus-Izas. But how could Jesus have arrived in Dewa – a major new Roman fortress run by the Roman

military on the fringes of the Roman empire – and have had sufficient authority to order the construction of a Temple to the Zodiac? *5 The idea might sound preposterous, but bear with me once again.

King Jesus' bid for power in Judaea and the Roman East had been thwarted by Vespasian, at the siege of Jerusalem, and it does appear that Jesus was taken captive, for Saul-Josephus mentions that royal hostages were taken after the fall of Jerusalem. Significantly, these hostages included the sons and brothers of King Izas of Adiabene, the character who I have already associated with King Jesus-Izas himself:

On the same day it was that the sons and brethren of King Izates (Izas-Jesus), together with many others of the eminent men of the populace, got together there, and besought Caesar (Titus) to give them his right hand for

their security ... For the time being Titus kept them all in custody; the king's sons and kinsmen he put into chains and led them with him to Rome, in order to make them hostages for their country's fidelity to the Romans.^{J9}
(my brackets)

If King Izas was King Jesus-Izas, as I strongly suspect, then here is a record of the surrender of Jesus' (Izas)' entire family, including his sons. So it is likely that King Jesus (Izas) was taken prisoner and crucified at this same time. This particular surrender was in August of AD 70, when the Temple itself was stormed by the Romans. But the upper city was not taken until the following month, and so the siege of Jerusalem had not yet ended.

As Saul-Josephus mentions, it is highly likely that King Jesus-Izas-Arthur was crucified for his part in that rebellion, hence the three crucifixions that took place in the Kidron Valley

just to the east of the Temple of Jerusalem. However, he was saved from the cross and nursed back to life by the magnanimity of his (cousin and) primary adversary, Saul-Josephus of Arimathaea. But what happened to Jesus-Izas after this? Apart from writing a history of the Judaic royal family, penned under the name of Jesus-Izas of Tiberias, and perishing in AD 101 during the rule of Emperor Trajan, we have absolutely no idea. So let's review the information we have already gleaned and see if any progress can be made.

King Jesus-Izas was a rebel Egypto-Judaic leader and therefore an enemy of the (Roman) state and so it would seem unlikely in the extreme that he could have been under the protection of the Roman army in AD 79, just nine years after the fall of

Jerusalem. However, that is not entirely so, for the Empire had a way of dealing with rebel kings, leaders and princes, and this did not always involve a slow and painful death on a cross. Some, like Caratacus of Britain, were brought to Rome and shown the benefits of the Roman system and way of life. Having been suitably impressed and indoctrinated with the power and luxuries of Rome, they were then sent back to their homelands as emissaries of *Pax Romana* – the benefits of Peace with Rome.

Sometimes there were other, more intractable leaders who could not be turned into model citizens, but Rome was not always at liberty to dispose of these characters, especially if doing so might spark another rebellion within the Empire. King Jesus-Izas-Arthur may have been just

such a character. But there was another reason for sparing this particular rebel, for although he was a bit of a thorn in the side of many Roman emperors, King Jesus was not without influential friends and supporters. As we have already seen, Saul-Josephus had made a plea for clemency on his behalf, which resulted in Jesus being taken down from the cross. In a similar fashion, Vespasian (before he became emperor) had delivered King Jesus-Izas to King Agrippa II for imprisonment and execution, and yet Agrippa simply ignored Vespasian and let Jesus go. This time, the plea for clemency came directly from the king's sister-wife, Berenice, and so it is through Berenice that we may glimpse a route for Jesus-Izas' salvation and eventual exile in England.

Readers may remember that



Fig 15.12 A banquet in the afterlife, from a tombstone in Dewa. It is similar, of course, to Palmyran depictions of the afterlife.


Berenice had an affair with Titus, the son of Vespasian; in fact, so taken with Berenice was Titus that this relationship became something of an obsession. Berenice was eleven years older than Titus, so her position as a Syrio-Judaean

princess may have been a factor in this obsession, rather than her youth and fecundity. However, it was Berenice who had previously begged King Agrippa (her brother-husband) for the life of King Jesus-Izas, while the Talmud maintains that it was Mary

Magdalene of Boethus who paid a great deal of money to Agrippa. This money may have been paid to facilitate Jesus' release from prison, as well as his elevation to High Priest of Jerusalem.

Here, then, we have a direct route by which the Roman establishment could have been persuaded to partially pardon Jesus-Izas and send him into exile, instead of to prison or to his death. It is entirely possible that Berenice made a request for clemency to her imperial lover, the Emperor's son, so that Jesus-Izas could once again be pardoned. Besides, King Jesus may well have been regarded as a son of the gods, just as the New Testament claims, and for the intensely spiritual Romans of this era it was not necessarily prudent to murder such a favourite of the gods.

However, whatever the reasoning for clemency this was only to be a partial pardon and King Jesus was to be sent into exile in a remote and a secure location – Dewa.

This may be why Dewa was placed in such a remote and inaccessible location, not simply on the edge of the Empire but situated behind a loop in a river in a vast forest surrounded by marshlands miles from anywhere on the western shores of England overlooking Ireland – just as the Grail stories relate about the Grail Castle known as Munsalvasche or Corbenic. It was here in Dewa that King Jesus-Izas was given his Egypto-Celtic pseudonym, and became immortalised as King Atur-ti  (King Arthur), the exiled warrior-king of Egypt; and it was because of this exile that his fame and heroism became

firmly attached to the legends and mythology of Celtic Britain.

However, it seems highly likely that King Jesus-Izas-Arthur was not exiled directly to England, for there was much bargaining to do before that could happen. To that end Jesus, being the senior rebel leader, was sent to trial before Vespasian in Alexandria. This was the late summer of AD 70 and although Vespasian was now nominally emperor of the Empire, he had not yet formally received that honour in Rome. Vespasian was dithering and with good reason, for the last three claimants to the Imperial throne had all been murdered in short order. What Vespasian needed was an auspicious sign from the gods that he was the true claimant to the Imperial purple, and King Jesus was about to provide that good omen.

Trial of King Jesus

King Jesus had a trial before Vespasian after the fall of Jerusalem? Surely I must be making all this up, for where does this information come from, and why has it never been discussed before? The problem here is that the references to this trial have all been doctored and hidden, they are certainly there but you have to look really hard for them.

At the beginning of Emperor Constantine's reign, Simple Judaism had spread widely and Constantine used this new power-base in his battles with his co-emperor, Licinius. These disputes culminated with the great battles at Hadrianopolis and Chrysopolis in AD 324, which left Constantine as sole ruler of the Empire. Shortly after this, in AD 325,

Constantine convened the Council of Nicaea, where the many and varied strands of Simple Judaism that had prospered since the days of Saul-Josephus of Arimathaea thrashed out a common creed. It was here at Nicaea that the Arians, who believed in a mortal King Jesus, were ruthlessly defeated, and from this time onwards Jesus became a god.

It was also from this time onwards that the new Catholic Christianity (previously Simple Judaism) became the state creed, capable of doctoring its own history to suit the new creed that had been decided at Nicaea. History was being rewritten in order to fit in with the desires of the bishops of Rome – the Catholic popes. But this process did not stop there, for when the Western arm of the Roman Empire dissolved

into chaos around AD 470, the popes of the Catholic Church found themselves in the position of *de facto* emperors. Here was the only pan-European body that maintained any sort of control over the warring nation states that replaced the once united Roman Empire, and here was the only pan-European body that could maintain the records and history of that empire. In short, the Catholic Church could not only doctor its own records and manuscripts, it could now alter all the records of the early Roman historians and writers too.

However, there is another reason for the following paragraphs not being recognised as being a record of the trial of King Jesus, and that is the late date for these events. Only now, with the new biblical chronology firmly in operation, can this event be

see for what it really is.

The general scenario is of Vespasian in Alexandria in the early autumn of AD 70, awaiting a propitious time to sail to Rome and formally accept the title of emperor. However, it is not at all certain that Vespasian would have been in Alexandria at this time. Cassius Dio in the *History of Rome* says that although Vespasian wanted to wait until the siege of Jerusalem had ended, this was taking too long and so he set sail for Rome.¹⁰ Tacitus' *Histories* says much the same kind of thing, that Vespasian sailed in March of AD 70, while Suetonius in *The Flavian Emperors* is indifferent to the precise date.¹² But all of these historians, and Cassius Dio in particular, were writing after the event and may be in error. In comparison, the only contemporary historian who was

in this region at the time, our old friend Saul-Josephus, says that Vespasian left for Rome while the siege of Jerusalem was still in progress, but that Titus did not receive word of his arrival in Rome until some time after his father's birthday (Nov 17th).^{J13}

The siege of Jerusalem was in progress from April to September of that year, so a likely time for Vespasian's departure was late August or early September. This would allow sufficient time for his crossing and for a confirmation of this crossing to be received by Titus in late November.

The reason for Vespasian's delay is understandable. Although his legions declared him emperor in July of AD 69, and some of them began the march against Emperor Vitellius in Rome, Vespasian himself marched in the opposite direction and set up a

court in Alexandria. Here, Vespasian received the support and tributes of many of the kings of Syria and the East. This march to Alexandria was not cowardice of any kind, but a strategic move to capture the wealth of Egypt, in order to bolster his own claim to the throne and to cut off grain supplies to Rome and thus undermine Vitellius' position as emperor. Vitellius was deposed in the December of that year, and Vespasian was unofficially declared emperor, but he then tarried for a further eight or nine months in Alexandria, waiting for the right time to sail. Why the delay?

This could no longer be the matter of grain supplies, as the new emperor must already have sent a few supplies in celebration of his victory over Vitellius. Saul-Josephus says that Vespasian was waiting for the siege of

Jerusalem to end, no doubt so that he could use the vast Temple coffers to shower gold on the plebeians in Rome. Support for new emperors was often bought with cash, and Vespasian needed as much as he could muster if he was to avoid the fate of Vitellius.

The other reason Vespasian tarried for quite so long was because he was a commoner, who lacked the moral authority of a descendant of the Caesar family or a royal prince of Egypt. Here was Vespasian, an ex-taxcollector and a virtual nobody, supplanting the line of Caesar emperors who had ruled Rome since Julius Caesar in 44 BC. Vespasian desperately needed a portent from the gods, as well as gold, in order to seal his rule over the empire. As Suetonius says:

Because he was, so to speak, an unexpected and still new emperor, he was lacking in authority and a certain majesty.¹⁴

Thus various portents from the gods were searched for, and a few were indeed found. A tree in Vespasian's home town had sprouted a new trunk for the birth of himself and each of his siblings, a sure sign of divine intervention (well, so Suetonius thought). But there was more: a dog brought a human hand and dropped it under Vespasian's table. An ox burst into his dining room and everyone fled, but the ox bowed down before Vespasian. A tree on his farm was blown over, but the next year it righted itself. These were portents from the gods, but they were not really enough to excite the senators, equestrians and plebeians of Rome.

What Vespasian really needed

was a well-known portent from the gods, something like the Egypto-Judaic Star Prophecy that had been circulating around the Eastern Empire, which foretold of a king of the whole world (a messiah or christ) arising in the east. But what Vespasian actually got, or demonstrated – the vital portent that gave him the much-needed authority and majesty to formally accept the Imperial Purple – was the ability to heal a ‘certain man’. Suetonius goes on to say:

A certain man from the common people who had lost his sight and likewise another with a crippled leg approached him together while he was sitting in the front of the tribunal (in Alexandria). Vespasian would, they had been told, make their eyes better if he spat on them and would heal the leg if he touched it with his heel. Vespasian could hardly believe that this enterprise would in any way be successful. But finally, when his friends were openly urging him on in front of the crowd, he

attempted both and the results did not let him down.¹⁵

Believe it or not, this tribunal in which Vespasian was persuaded to heal ‘a certain man’ is actually an account of King Jesus-Izas-Arthur’s trial before Vespasian. Now this might not sound like a trial of the biblical King Jesus, but bear with me a while on this one, for the text needs some explaining. Here are the bullet points that we need to absorb, before the original truth can be seen.

- i. According to Suetonius, the peculiar ‘healing’ at this tribunal was a central component of Vespasian gaining the ‘authority and majesty’ that he required to become emperor. All the Roman historians mention this tribunal and the ‘healing’, and all agree it was

an important event. But how does one gain 'majesty' from healing a pauper?

ii. The blind man is introduced as being a 'certain man'. Phrases like this are commonly used by Saul-Josephus in order to cover up a well-known personality, and the use of the phrase 'man of the common people' is also rather gospel-like. Have the accounts of Tacitus and Suetonius been subsequently doctored?

iii. One of the primary reasons for believing that this 'healing' is a reference to King Jesus, is that the Talmud describes Jesus as being:

Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai (Saul-Josephus) said: He (Jesus) *6 limped on one foot, and he walked haltingly. He (Jesus) was blind in one eye. He practised

Here, King Jesus-Izas is described as having one eye and a lame leg, which is exactly how the Roman accounts describe the ‘common man’ (or men) who were presented before Vespasian.

- iv. So why this derogatory description of King Jesus-Izas, in both the Talmud and the Roman accounts? The answer is that this event occurred in Alexandria just after Jesus-Izas and his family had surrendered at the siege of Jerusalem. Saul-Josephus Flavius records that three of the leaders of the Jewish Revolt, who had been his former acquaintances, had been crucified in the Kidron Valley just to the east of the Temple of

Jerusalem. After being taken down from the cross, two of the accused leaders died while one survived. And this is, of course, a very familiar story to anyone who has read the gospel accounts.

The surrender of Jesus-Izas in Jerusalem was in August of AD 70, and Vespasian did not travel from Alexandria to Rome until September, which leaves a four-week period during which Jesus-Izas could recover and be taken in chains to Vespasian in Alexandria to answer for his actions before the new emperor. Thus, the disabilities that Jesus is described as having in the Talmud are actually post-crucifixion wounds. Significantly, Tacitus says that this man also had a dislocated arm, which is exactly

the kind of injury we might expect from a crucifixion.

- v. Another reason for assuming that this was a description of a bruised and bloodied King Jesus-Izas being dragged before Vespasian is the method of curing his eyesight. Vespasian is said to have spat in the man's eye but, in a similar fashion, the Gospel of Mark says:

And Jesus took the blind man ... and when he had spat on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw anything. (Jesus) put his hands upon his eyes and made (the blind man) look up: and his sight was restored, and saw every man clearly. [B17](#)

In other words, Vespasian was mimicking King Jesus' healing techniques, and he was doing so for a very specific reason.

Vespasian was lacking the royal connections and illustrious family heritage that Jesus had, and both he and his supporters were keenly aware of this. King Jesus was a princely *magus* and healer who was the royal heir to all the known world, and so if Vespasian could heal Jesus then surely Vespasian was greater still than Jesus himself. The translators of Suetonius and Tacitus appear to agree with this hypothesis, as they observe:

What will, perhaps, strike the reader as most remarkable, is the singular coincidence of this story with the account of the miracles of Christ ... (as if) the scene was planned in imitation of them. If the idea of plagiarism is to be accepted, it receives confirmation in the preceding paragraph, forming ... another scene of the same drama ... It is remarkable that perhaps Vespasian himself from his

residence in Judaea, were in possession of such exact details of two of Christ's miracles, if not a third.

We find Basilides appearing to Vespasian in the Temple of Serapis, under circumstances that cannot fail to remind us of Christ's suddenly standing in the midst of his disciples, 'when the doors were shut'. This incident again has very much the appearance of a parody on the gospel story. 18

But this textual coincidence between the accounts of the Roman historians and the gospels is not quite so remarkable, if this was indeed Jesus himself who was standing before Vespasian in Alexandria. In this case, Jesus-Izas' semi-divine healing events had not been performed in the previous generation (in the AD 30s), as these translators are assuming, they were current

affairs and intimately connected to the Jewish Revolt that had only just ended. Thus these Roman reports are not biblical parodies, as such, but quite possibly the true origin of some of these accounts. The appearance of Jesus to his disciples may not have happened in Judaea, as we are led to believe, but in Alexandria where they were all now captives of Vespasian. Jesus may have suddenly appeared before the disciples, much to their surprise because they all thought him to be dead, with Thomas being especially doubtful that this was really him.

Indeed, this replication of Jesus' miracle-working and healing must be why Vespasian's supporters arranged this entire

charade in the first place, which even Vespasian himself did not believe would work. Undoubtedly, Vespasian's supporters had previously arranged that if Jesus went along with the pretence of being cured by Vespasian, then they would be lenient with him and his family - and so Jesus dutifully opened his 'blind eye' and was 'cured'.

- vi. The final reason for thinking that these accounts were describing the trial of King Jesus-Izas, is that when Vespasian was alone in the Temple of Serapis (an Egypto-Greek combination of Osiris and Apis), he was approached by a mysterious person called Basilides, who conferred upon Vespasian 'the

sacred foliage, crown and bread-cakes'. These were the symbols of kingship for the Ptolemaic pharaohs of Egypt, and so this man was conferring a Greco-Egyptian kingship upon Vespasian.

(Vespasian) having entered alone, without attendants, the temple of Serapis, to take the auspices respecting the establishment of his power, and having done his utmost to propitiate the deity, upon turning round, [his freedman] Basilides appeared before him, and seemed to offer him the sacred leaves, garland, and cakes, according to the usage of the place, although no one had admitted him, and he had long laboured under a muscular debility, which would hardly have allowed him to walk into the temple; besides which, it was certain that at the very time he was far away. (Suetonius, Twelve Caesars, Vespasian 7.)

So who was this mysterious

Basilides? The name Basilides is a derivation of *basileus eidos* βασιλεὺς εἶδος meaning 'Image of a King' or perhaps 'Behold the King'. It is a title that is similar to that of Tutankhaten (Tutankhamen) whose name meant 'Image of the Aten' (Image of Amun). Elsewhere, Tacitus specifically says that Basilides was a 'leading Egyptian', and it is thought that he was the priest called Basilides that Vespasian had previously met on Mt Carmel (supposedly the mountain in northern Israel overlooking the plain of Megiddo). Note that Mt Carmel was the mount upon which the priest Elijah officiated back in the days of King Ahab, and that Elijah and Jesus became intimately linked by their similar

roles and by their ‘meeting’ at the so-called ‘transfiguration’ upon a mountain (Mt Carmel?). And so Basilides was a senior Egyptian priest-king associated with Mt Carmel, which is therefore a description that is very familiar to this research.

Furthermore, Vespasian was aware that Basilides had been otherwise detained by sickness and should have been many days ride away. It was this impossibility of a meeting at the Temple of Serapis that caused this event to be reported as a miracle: a portent from the gods. And note again the comment Suetonius makes about Basilides’ infirmity:

(Basilides) had long laboured under a muscular debility, which would hardly have allowed him to walk into the temple.

Yet this is a description that directly links Priest-King Basilides with the 'common man' with a crippled leg who was brought before Vespasian to be healed; and it also links Basilides with the description of Jesus in the Talmud, which likewise says that Jesus (Balaam) 'limped on one foot, and walked haltingly'.

So who was this mysterious Basilides, who played such an important role in the coronation of Emperor Vespasian? Who in this era, was the 'Egyptian priest who was the 'image of a king' and was exalted enough confer the kingship of the Ptolemaic pharaohs of Egypt upon commander Vespasian? Which 'Egyptian priest-king' had an infirmity that prevented him from

walking (or was perhaps reported as being dead after his crucifixion) and should not logically have been in the Temple of Serapis in the first place? The answer to all these related questions has to be: King Jesus-Izas himself, who was most definitely the son of an Egypto-Persian royal family; who was known as the Egyptian False Prophet; and who should have been detained in Jerusalem either by the continuing siege or by the many infirmities (or reported death) that he had sustained during his crucifixion. And these were severe injuries that would have included pierced feet, pierced arms and a dislocated shoulder.

What these deliberately

covert and confused Roman reports represent, therefore, is not necessarily a parody of the gospels, as these passages are often portrayed, but a quite serious and sober replication of the gospels for dramatic rather than humorous effect. In the gospel accounts it was Jesus who cured the lame and the blind (by spitting in the eye), and it was Jesus who showed himself to his disciples to prove that he was alive. Yet here the Roman courtiers in Alexandria are deliberately reversing the roles and arranging for Vespasian to perform the very same 'miracles' upon King Jesus-Izas, who had been presumed dead. To the common Roman legionnaires in Alexandria, commander

Vespasian had now surpassed Jesus in both his divine miracle-working and his royal status, and he was now ready to sail to Rome and accept the Imperial Throne.

Further evidence that the mysterious Basilides was actually Jesus-Izas is contained in the notes made by the translators of Suetonius and Tacitus, who say of this incident:

Tacitus describes Basilides as a man of rank among the Egyptians, a priest officiating at Mt Carmel. This is so incompatible with (Suetonius' description of) his being a Roman freedman, that commentators concur in supposing that the word '*libertus*' has crept into the text by some inadvertence of a scribe. Basilides appears to have been half-Greek, half-Jew, and to have belonged to the celebrated Platonic school of Alexandria. (Thompson and Forester translation.)

Note that Basilides was said to have been a Greek, a Jew and an Egyptian priest of the Platonic school of Alexandria - all of which could also be attributed to Jesus himself, in this new interpretation of the gospels.

And what about that strange assertion by Suetonius that Basilides (Jesus-Izas) was a Roman freedman? How could this be so? Indeed, this is this is an assertion that appears so incompatible with Basilides being an Egyptian priest that all the modern texts place 'freedman' in brackets, to denote that this assertion is uncertain and unreliable. The answer to this conundrum is contained in the next book in this trilogy, *Jesus, King of Edessa*, where we shall

see that King Jesus-Izas' father had been a captive (a hostage) of Rome for more than a decade, and he was only released from captivity (from house arrest in Rome) just before the death of Emperor Octavian. No doubt this is what Suetonius was referring to here: that members of the royal family of Jesus-Izas had indeed been Roman captives in the early decades AD.

Perhaps a summary of this strange incident in Alexandria is required at this point. It would appear that Vespasian and his many supporters had been looking for strategies to garner some 'majesty' and increase the social standing of their commander, to boost his chances of becoming emperor. And to that end the

Roman historians mention all kinds of bizarre portents and oracles that demonstrated divine approval for Vespasian's bid for the Imperial Throne. These included trees re-erecting themselves, a dog dropping a human hand at his feet, statues turning by themselves, and a bull charging into Vespasian's dining room and bowing down before him. But while these were all considered to be favourable 'portents from the gods', this mysterious character called Basilides could give Vespasian much more than that: he could bestow royal approval and majesty upon Vespasian, and perhaps bestow the Eastern Star Prophecy too. The Roman historians say that although the

Jews understood that this oracle applied to them, they were mistaken and it actually referred to Vespasian (because he was the commander of the Roman East). But in reality the Star Prophecy referred to King Jesus-Izas, because it was he who had been born under the Eastern Star.

King Jesus-Izas, as the rightful king of Egypto-Persia, had all of the majesty that Vespasian required and more besides, plus possession of the Star Prophecy oracle too. And here Jesus-Izas is being forced to confer that semi-divine status and that all-important Star Prophecy upon Vespasian, complete with 'foliage, crown and bread-cakes'. So the Egyptian priest-king called Basilides is most certainly a

covert reference to the biblical King Jesus-Izas, and it was he who was being forced to confer the Egypto-Eastern kingship upon Vespasian.

Therefore, this deliberately confusing episode in Alexandria was actually a record of the trial, judgement and complete capitulation of King Jesus-Izas before Vespasian: who was the victor in Judaea and now the emperor of Rome. Jesus-Izas had unconditionally surrendered to Vespasian, and his only option now was to bargain and barter for the continuation of his royal line. And if that meant conferring the Egypto-Persian kingship upon the commoner Vespasian, in order that his wife, his children and his followers might escape

persecution and death, then so be it.

Napoleon

That this tribunal, as described by Suetonius, was definitely a trial – as well as being a carefully choreographed charade designed to give Vespasian sufficient divine portents to rule – is suggested by the accounts of Berenice: the sisterwife of Herod Agrippa II and mistress of Titus. Earlier, I had suggested that the primary reason that King Jesus-Izas was exiled, instead of being executed, was that Berenice was a loyal supporter, and as Titus' mistress she could have applied a great deal of pressure upon Titus and Vespasian to allow clemency. A hint of this pressure is perhaps recorded by Quintilian, a

Roman orator and contemporary of this era who said:

I note in the book of observations, published by Septimius, that Cicero appeared in such a case, while I myself, when I appeared on behalf of Queen Berenice, actually pleaded before her.¹⁹

From this account, Professor Young argues that Vespasian had to deal with tribunals that included:

... allegations that were a mixture of Jewish political and theological charges. Vespasian could hardly profess a full knowledge of Jewish religious practice. Berenice would have proved useful in providing a repository of essential experience and information on Jewish practices.²⁰

While it is true that Berenice had stood in on the trial of Saul-Josephus some years earlier, she is not the most obvious expert on Jewish affairs that

Vespasian could have called upon during a Roman tribunal. How about Saul-Josephus, for instance?

No, the reason for Berenice's presence before a Roman tribunal is that this was the trial of her close associate, royal prince and political rebel, King Jesus-Izas. The trial (or tribunal) was the one described by Suetonius previously, and it was held in Alexandria in September AD 70, just before Vespasian left for Rome. Jesus, who had been summarily crucified after the fall of Jerusalem but reprieved by Saul-Josephus, was brought – bruised, bloodied and defeated – before Vespasian, the new Emperor of Rome. Titus may have intended this as a show-trial for Jesus' life, which is why Berenice travelled with him to Alexandria to plead his case. Vespasian's supporters, however,

saw in this beaten husk of an Egypto-Persian priest-king an opportunity to confer some of his royal prestige upon the otherwise undistinguished Vespasian. The Star Prophecy referred to this man, King Jesus-Izas, but here was an opportunity to liberate that Egypto-Judaeon prophecy and place it upon the shoulders of Vespasian.

A secret deal was done. Vespasian got his prestige (and the money from the Temple of Jerusalem), and immediately left for Rome. King Jesus-Izas got a reprieve for his family and a stay of execution for his own life, with the proviso that he must go into exile. However, rebels in exile can often regroup and gather fresh forces to yet again disrupt the status quo, which could be a problem. A classic example of this is Britain's bungled first exile of Napoleon in

1814. His first exile in Elba was not far enough away, and Napoleon escaped and started another rebellion, which resulted in his utter defeat at the battle of Waterloo in 1815. Having learned their lesson, the British ensured that Napoleon's final exile was going to be as remote as possible, and that is how he found himself on the island of St Helena in the far south Atlantic. Since Britain ruled the seas in that era, there was going to be no hope of escape for Napoleon from this forgotten outcrop of rock, and he did indeed expire in that remote and lonely location.

Vespasian was several centuries ahead of the British military commanders here. He understood that, like Napoleon and his supporters in France, King Jesus-Izas was a powerful royal rebel commander who

controlled and influenced large swathes of the population in the Roman Empire's southern and eastern provinces. If such a rebel was going to be remotely exiled, and therefore politically emasculated, the most suitable location would have been the far northwestern corner of the Empire – as far away as humanly possible from his political power-base, at the exact opposite end of the Empire. Furthermore, such an exile had to be secure, in order to prevent King Jesus-Izas from being slipped back to his homelands (as was Napoleon) to provide the seed-corn for a new revolt.

But there was a logical solution to this problem. If Jesus-Izas could be permanently corralled in a Roman army camp, which was itself in an unusually remote position on the edge of the Empire, then it would be

virtually impossible for him to escape. Therefore, it is entirely possible that this was the sole reason for the construction of Dewa. This fortress had nothing to do with the current military strategy in Britain, it was constructed solely to house a political prisoner and his immediate companions. If so, then Dewa had exactly the same role as Spandau prison in Berlin, the notorious jail for captured Nazis that ended up having Rudolf Hess as its solitary occupant. But perhaps a better comparison might be made with Guantanamo Bay, the 'prison fortress' that was deliberately constructed in Cuba so that it resided away from the detainees' Middle Eastern power base. Like Dewa, Guantanamo Bay was deliberately positioned to keep its detainees away from their supporters, beyond

American politics, beyond the American legal system, and beyond American demonstrations - thus it is out of sight and almost out of mind.

In remote and isolated Dewa, in splendid and secure isolation, King Jesus-Izas and his immediate followers could have been allowed the 'freedom' of the camp and even allowed to construct a vast temple to the cosmos, while the Flavian emperors could be secure in the knowledge that their activities in Chester would have no effect whatsoever on Judaeo-Syrian or Egypto-Roman politics. However, there was one other problem for Vespasian to solve, if the dynasty of King Jesus-Izas was to be neutered forever – the royal succession. The solution to this was achieved through a two-pronged attack on his descendants.

Firstly, the sons of Jesus-Izas

would have to be silenced, and this is why Eusebius claimed that the bloodline of Jesus' family was being systematically eradicated by the Flavian emperors of Rome, as we saw in Chapter II. Jesus' entire family represented a real threat to the Flavian emperors, and they were taking no chances.

The second solution to this problem can be seen in the wounds that the Fisher King received, as documented in the Grail legends. The Fisher King was a reference to King Arthur-Jesus, as we saw earlier, and his wounds were pointedly said to be in his genitals and these made him infirm and powerless. My initial thought was that this was yet another carping criticism of circumcision, by someone very like Saul-Josephus of Arimathaea, and this is why there are

numerous references in the Grail legends to sacred 'lances' dripping with blood. The veiled analogy between the bleeding lance and the circumcised penis hardly needs labouring. However, while this explanation may well be the intended symbolism, it is also possible that the documented wounds suggest complete castration, especially as this wounding robbed the Fisher King of his potency and power.

In *Mort d'Arthur*, Sir Perceval deliberately wounds himself in a very similar manner, after he was nearly seduced by a lady who came onto his ship. Clearly, the wounds that Perceval inflicted on himself were actually castration, not circumcision, and he did so as a severe form of penance in order to preserve the lady's honour and his piety. Yet this wounding appears to

be very similar to the fate of the Fisher King, and so it is likely that this wounding in the genitals was actually castration rather than circumcision, and this is why the Fisher King's kingdom was 'barren'. It was barren because the Fisher King (Arthur-Jesus) could not have any more children.

So why would King Jesus-Izas have been subjected to castration?^{*8} Unfortunately for Vespasian, men are fertile until they die and the last thing that the Flavian emperors would have wanted is for a whole new creche of princely Jesuses to be sired in his place of exile – each of which could have provided the focus of a rallying cry for a new rebellion. Logic would dictate that exile for such a dangerous rebel would have to mean castration. This, I believe, is where the notion of the maimed Fisher King was derived

from – King Jesus-Izas-Arthur was not only a King of Pisces who had been exiled to the edge of the Empire, but he had been castrated too.

King David's Fortress

Is this why the Dewa Victrix fortress was so much larger than the standard Roman army camp, and so remotely located, just as the castle of the Fisher King was likewise remotely located? Did it have a special duty in housing a dangerous political prisoner, and so it was deliberately kept away from the rest of Roman Britain? Is this why the Piscean Temple of the Zodiac was built inside the camp at Dewa, rather than outside as was usual practice; so that its devotees could be monitored and guarded? Is this why the Temple of the Zodiac had its own bathhouse, to

keep the ‘unclean’ Gentile Romans separate from Jesus-Izas and his fellow Egypto-Judaic disciples? Is this why we see such a unique and yet prestigious temple on the fringes of the Empire, miles away from any city or town of any significance? A more detailed description of the temple complex at Dewa may well shed some further light onto these questions, but perhaps we should firstly take a quick look at this fortress’ name.

Current thinking is that the name Dewa Victrix (Victorious Dewa) was derived from the local name for the river, which may have been called the Dew after a local goddess (today, the river is called the Dee). An alternative to this is said to be visible in a Roman translation of Dewa (Deva), which may have been derived from the Latin *diva* meaning ‘goddess’. However, it

is likely that the Latin word *diva* was originally derived from the east, for the same word also means ‘goddess’ in Sanskrit. So what, then, was the true origin of this supposedly Latin word?

In fact, if we look back at the Persian sacred texts of the Zend-Avista, we find that Deva (Dewa) is a term for a great god, not necessarily a goddess, and this is a term that was coined before the evolution of Latin. Furthermore, since the Sanskrit word *deva* (*dewa*) means ‘bright’ or ‘shining one’ it is likely that this god was a stellar-god: one of the myriad of shining stars. It is from this same bright and shining god of Persia that the Indian festival of Dewali (Diwali) was created. Dewali is a sacred celebration for Hindus, Sikhs and Jains and it is, of course, a festival of lights; and since this is lights in the plural, it

is again likely that this is a celebration of the stars in the cosmos. Although this analysis might imply that the name for the Dewa fortress may have been named after a Persio-Latin Stellar-god, there is an Egyptian equivalent to this, as we shall see.

Having said all that, I think that this explanation is not the full story here. The beauty of the associations that have already been suggested, between King Jesus and the Dewa Victrix fortress, is that this theory begins to explain things that have been, up until this time, utterly lost to history. It may even explain little things like the symbology of the Welsh flag, the Y Ddraig Goch or Red Dragon, which I believe is based upon the name for the Dewa fortress. The layout of this flag is bold and specific and the Welsh people have a long tradition of

recording their history, so how did they manage to lose much of the reasoning behind the adoption of this dragon symbology?

It is commonly said, with little in the way of evidence, that the Welsh flag was derived from the Roman and Parthian cavalry legions, which often used a bronze *draco* (or dragon) battle-standard atop a long pole. Although there is a tombstone of a Samatian cavalryman at Dewa, who holds one of these *draco* dragon-standards, this association seems unlikely to me as the Roman *draco* standards bore little resemblance to what became the Welsh red dragon. Besides, even these *draco* standards were originally designed by the Israelites, rather than the Romans or Parthians:

And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put

it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a fiery serpent (molten copper?) had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived. [B21](#)



Fig 15.13 A Roman or Israelite draco standard, which is not very dragon-like.

I am not
entirely sure
that it was
'fiery serpents'
(*seraph*
nakhask
שרף נחש) that
were 'biting'

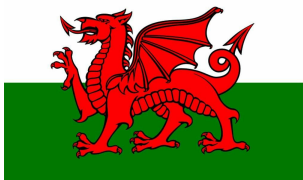


Fig 15.14 The Dewi dragon on the Welsh flag.

Moses' army.

Moses was

busy annihilating Canaanite cities at the time and the term being used here can be confused between 'snake' and 'copper', and so it is possible that this was an account of the Canaanites throwing molten copper at Moses' army – just as Queen Zenobia of Palmyra was to do in a later era. This is a very effective defensive technique, as one can probably imagine. Moses' solution to this problem was to make 'serpents of brass', which somehow saved the soldiers; and so effective was this that identical military standards were still being used in the Roman army over a thousand years later. But if the Welsh dragon symbology did not come from a Judaeo-Roman cavalry standard, because they bear little resemblance to

each other, then perhaps the etymology involved may help in deriving an alternative explanation.

It is said that the English word 'dragon' was derived from the Welsh *ddraig*, and both of these were derived from the Latin *draco* meaning 'serpent' or 'dragon'. This again proves, so it is said, that the symbolism for the Welsh dragon came from the Roman cavalry legions and their *draco* standards. Well, not entirely, for the Latin *draco* was itself derived from the Hebrew *dragon* דָּגוֹן meaning 'fish', 'whale' and eventually 'dragon'. In the stories of the Tanakh, the *dragon* (dragon) was the giant whale, sea serpent or sea monster that swallowed Jonah;^{B22} a strange tale that I have already demonstrated, in the book *Eden*, was based in part upon the Egyptian mythology of the Sun being swallowed by Aapop, the evil serpent

or dragon of the Djuat (the underworld). So the dragon has an etymology and a symbolism that comes directly from the Egypto-Judaic East and predates the Roman legions by a considerable margin. But how could this Eastern symbolism have arrived in Wales in this early era, if not through the Roman legions?

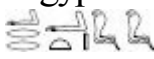



Fig 15.15 A Roman draco standard, on a tombstone from Dewa.

One possible answer is through the Egypto-Judaeans of King Jesus-Arthur and his fellow captive exiles. An alternative explanation, which actually has the same cultural and linguistic roots, is

that the Welsh dragon symbolism was derived from a Welsh red dragon-god of the sea called Dewi (Dewa), a red dragon that became a symbol of kingship under King Arthur and the Pendragon monarchy.²³ Strangely enough, this Welsh sea-dragon called Dewi has a very modern manifestation, for it is the origin of Davy Jones' Locker: an old nautical euphemism for a grave at the bottom of the sea. The Welsh term Dewi means David (or Davy), as we shall see shortly, while the Jones portion of this phrase was derived from Jonah יוֹנָה or Jones Ιωνας, the name of the same unfortunate individual (Jonah) who was thrown overboard during a storm and swallowed by the *daigon* דָּגוֹן 'whale' or 'sea dragon' and remained there for three days. Thus Jones' (Jonah's) 'locker' or 'trunk' was

actually the stomach of the sea-dragon called Dewi (Davy), and this trunk was actually a manifestation of the Egyptian 'underworld' and it held the Sun and the stars during the hours of darkness.*9

This explanation strongly implies that the Welsh Dewi sea-dragon was again based upon the biblical story of Jonah, and so this seemingly ancient tradition of a Welsh sea-dragon god is unlikely to predate the arrival of Judaeo-Christianity into Wales. But the Welsh were not the only people to associate themselves with a serpent-like beast. Jesus was an Egypto-Persian royal, and the primary symbols of the Lower Egyptian monarchy were the *uraeus*  snake and the *djeseret*  red crown, and a combination of these symbols would also be a red serpent

or a red dragon. But this Egypto-dragon symbolism of the *uraeus* serpent was closely related to the same Judaic *dragon* dragon symbolism that we have just explored, and so again we might freely speculate that the exiled King Jesus-Arthur was the originator of these Celtic symbols, myths and legends.

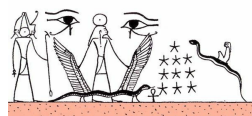
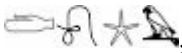


Fig 15.16 A winged illustration of Aapop. Tomb of Tuthmoses III.

However, there is another side to this symbolism, for St David, the almost mythical ‘sixth century’ patron saint of Wales, is called Sant Dewi, or St David. So

Dewi was not simply a name for a Welsh dragon, but also the Welsh name for the Old Testament King David. In

fact, I have previously argued that the Judaic name 'David' was derived from the Egyptian Duat (Dwad) , which means 'star' in much the same fashion as Dewi does. In addition, St David of Wales was also known as Dewi Ddyfrwr, or 'David the Water-man' or even 'Aquaticus', a title which not only refers to the Dewi dragon being a god from the sea, but also to the later Davidic royal line from the New Testament being identified with fish (the Judaic *dragon*).

In addition, Saint David's mother was said to have been King Arthur's niece, and this surprising link to the exiled King Jesus-Arthur may be why, in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, it was observed that the Welsh 'upheld their own bad customs against the true Easter of the Catholic Church' (paraphrased). If St David had been

influenced by King Jesus-Arthur and the remnants of the Galilean Sect living in Dewa, then these 'bad customs' would not be surprising. The Essenes and Galileans ran a Solar calendar that was always in conflict with the Lunar calendar of both orthodox Judaism and Simple Judaism alike, just as Bede reports.²⁴



Fig 15.17 The lion of Judah.

This complex series of explanations may therefore be the true reasoning for the adoption of the Dewi red-dragon for the flag of Wales. Saint David was a Christian and he therefore named himself after the

royal line of King David or King Dewi (King Dewa). In addition, the primary royal symbols of the Egypto-Judaic Davidic royal line were redness^{*10} and serpents (or dragons), and so the Welsh House of Saint David (Ty Sant Dewi) would undoubtedly have become linked to a red dragon. This is the reason, in my view, for the red-dragon symbol being adopted for the flag of Wales. In fact, by calling himself Ty Dewi (the House of David), St David is apparently claiming a direct royal bloodline from the Old Testament King David, but how would this be possible? The answer lies, once more, in the presence of King Jesus-Izas-Arthur and some of his family members at the Dewa fortress. Jesus was prominently proclaimed as a direct descendant of the Davidic royal bloodline, and the Welsh St David

claimed a direct descent from King Arthur (King Jesus).

But this still does not explain how a sea-monster like the Jewish *dragon* דַגּוֹן became a modern dragon. The *dragon* was an incarnation of Aapop, the evil snake of the underworld, and the serpent symbology of the Egypto-Judaic royalty was also snakelike in appearance. This imagery would surely have created an emblem similar to the Parthio-Roman *draco*, the snakelike battle-standards carried by the Roman cavalry. So how did the Welsh manage to derive a snakelike creature that has four legs? The answer lies in the alternative symbol of the Davidic royalty. King David was not only an Egypto-Israelite, he was also of the royal line of Judah and the traditional symbol of Judah was the lion. But Jesus was of this same royal

line, and Revelations 5:5 makes it clear that he too was identified with the lion of Judah.

That

there was a general transformation from the ancient

Egypto-Israelite snake symbolism to that of a Judaic lion is

confirmed by the Grail legends, which say that the serpent imagery represented Mosaic law and traditional Judaism, while the lion represented both the New Testament covenant and Jesus himself.²⁵ Thus, the traditional snake symbolism of this ancient Egypto-Israelite and Davidic

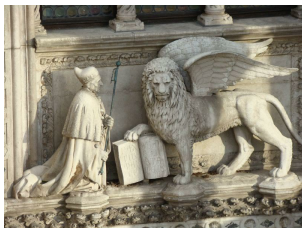


Fig 15.18 A winged lion of Mark the Evangelist.

bloodline was being replaced by a new symbol – the lion. There is a possibility, therefore, that the heraldic symbols of Scotland and England were influenced by this same lion symbolism, along with Richard I's famous Cœur de Lion, the Lion Heart (the Heart of Judah).

However, in contrast with English and Scottish traditions, it would appear that the Welsh bards and chroniclers have made a compromise. It would appear that the Egypto-Judaic snake symbolism has been merged with the traditional lion symbolism of Judah, for King Jesus was still Egypto-Israelite, even if he was from the subset (tribe) of Judah. The addition of wings to this symbolism may have been derived from the winged lion of Mark the Evangelist or perhaps from the winged sphinxes of Persia. In this

fashion, the snakelike and fire-breathing Aapop-Seraph-Dagon has grown legs, claws and wings. Yet this fabulous new heraldic beast of the Egypto-Judah tribe has kept its primary snakelike characteristics of scales, long tongue, fire-breathing, egg-laying a pointed tail and redness, and so the result is the mythical Red Dragon of Dewi. In addition, this fabulous new dragon-beast has managed to maintain its original Hebrew name, and so the *dagon* דגון has become the Welsh *draigau* or the English dragon.

At long last, these convoluted arguments bring us back to the name for the Dewa fortress, for it is entirely possible that Dewa Victrix was so named for very similar reasons. Dewa not only refers to stars and dragons, it is also the Welsh name for King David – the monarch who originally owned

King Jesus-Arthur's magical sword, Excalibur (Caliburn), the sword that still retains its original Egypto-Judaic name. So this Roman fortress at Chester was not simply called 'Divine Victory' or even 'Star Victory', it was probably named 'King David's Victory', because that was a title of the very special royal prisoner that it was created for.

However, there is one final option for us to consider; one that is equally compelling. As we saw earlier, the name 'David' was derived from or related to the Egyptian Duat, because the Hebrew name for David was Duwad דוד (when rendering the ו *vav* or *waw* as a 'u', as is common). In this case, the name for Fortress Dewa may be linked to the Egyptian Duat or Underworld; and so it is probably of no coincidence that the Celtic place-

name, Avalon, is also derived from the Celtic Underworld, which was known as Avilion. The Isle of Avalon was, of course, the mythical location to which King Arthur was taken to recover from his wounds, and the common confusion between Avalon and apples may be due to the Palmyran imagery of the Duat containing a multitude of apples and fruits (see [fig 12.7](#)). In other words, Avalon was Fortress Dewa, with both being named after the Underworld.^{[26](#)}

Liber Floridus

Having researched all of this evidence in favour of King Jesus-Arthur being closely associated with the Temple of the Zodiac at Fortress Dewa, for the first edition of *King Jesus*, it was very heartening to discover new evidence

that strongly supports this hypothesis. This additional and quite persuasive confirmation is to be found in the *Liber Floridus*, a twelfth century document penned by the Flemish cleric, Lambert of St Omer. This venerable document represents one of the earliest references to King Arthur, and it demonstrates how widely this material was circulating. It is of interest because it contains an unusual assertion; it claims that:

There is in Britain, in the land of the Picts, a palace of the warrior Arthur, built with marvelous art and variety, in which the history of all his exploits and wars is to be seen in sculpture. He fought twelve battles against the Saxons who had occupied Britain.²⁷

So, according to Lambert, there was a palace in Britain which celebrated the twelve battles or exploits of King Arthur in the form of twelve

sculptures. But what did this structure look like, and what form did these sculptures take? A Corpus Christi Cambridge manuscript which dates from just a century after the *Liber Floridus* may hold the answer to this, for it says that:

Carausius^{*11}, the emperor, built a round house with polished stones (*politis lapidibus*) on the bank of the River Carron, known as the Oven of Arthur.²⁸

The ‘round house’ with ‘polished stones’ (or sculptures) and the palace of Arthur’s twelve exploits are generally thought to be one and the same building. In which case, we may well have here a garbled account of the Temple of the Zodiac, which was almost ‘round’ in shape and most certainly did house twelve sculptures, and I have already linked this

magnificent (and highly polished) edifice to King Arthur. The suggestion that the sculptures were dedicated to Arthur's 'exploits' rather than stellar constellations may appear to negate my argument that the Temple was dedicated to the zodiac, but that is not so. I imagine that the twelve exploits of King Arthur were very similar to the twelve exploits of Hercules, and undoubtedly the latter were mythological tales about the twelve signs of the precessional zodiac – the Great Months or precessional eras that Orion-Hercules had to battle to introduce every 2,000 years or so.

This new evidence would suggest that the 'circular' Palace of Arthur (the Temple of the Zodiac) was actually constructed by a Roman commander on the banks of the river Carron. This may seem like a problem,

because although the Temple of the Zodiac was indeed constructed by the Romans, the river Carron flows into the Firth of Forth in Scotland and is a long way north of Chester. Alternatively, the *De Miraculis Sanctae Mariae Laudensis* suggests that Arthur's Oven lay near Exeter, in Britain's southwest. Clearly, the true location of the river Carron and its associated circular palace was and is uncertain. However, it is said that name for the river Carron was derived from the Celtic word *caers*, which was in turn derived from the Latin *castra* meaning 'fortress'. Apparently, there are a number of fortresses on the river Carron, from which its name was derived. This, however, is a fortuitous etymology for the arguments being made in this chapter, for it just so happens that Caers^{*12} was the Celtic

name for the city of Chester (which was called Castra in the Latin). Thus, according to these very early texts, the round palace that contained twelve sculptures depicting the exploits of King Arthur was actually built upon the river that ran through the city of Chester, and so this must have been a reference to the Temple of the Zodiac in Fortress Dewa. This strongly links King Arthur with Fortress Dewa, which is what I have already asserted from the evidence already uncovered.

Architect

Regarding the architectural design of the Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa, it should be noted that King Jesus-Izas would have been one of the core holders of the knowledge of astrological precession. We have

already seen evidence that Jesus took 5,000 of his followers out into the wilderness (at Qumran) and gave them the knowledge of the era of Pisces (the bread and fishes). It was also Jesus-Izas who burned down the palace of Herod (Archelous) at Hamat Teverya near Tiberias, so that Saul-Josephus could not see the mosaic of the zodiac that lay prominently on its floor, and therefore could not hold the people of Tiberias to account for this orthodox-Judaic heresy. We also saw how Jesus created twelve disciples and then a further seventy-two, in honour of the detailed workings of precessional astrology. Thus we can be sure that precessional astrology lay at the heart of the Galilean Sect's creed, and so if anyone within the Empire were to design a temple dedicated to Pisces and the zodiac, it is highly likely to

have been Jesus-Izas or other members of the rebel Galilean Sect.

We can also be certain that King Jesus-Izas-Arthur would have been conversant with Egypto-Judaic metrology and mathematics. Surprisingly, the evidence for this is to be found in the New Testament, where his profession is not given as a 'carpenter' but as a '*tekton*' τεκτων. Now while it might be argued that a *tekton* can be translated as 'carpenter', Jesus was a prince of Egypt and Parthia, and so it is simply impossible that he could have been a lowly artisan. Instead, he was actually an architect, which is what *tekton* really means, and you can still hear the similarity in pronunciation between the original Greek word and its modern English equivalent. However, although Jesus would undoubtedly have been a

‘speculative’ masonic architect, it is also likely that princely Masons in this era were operative architects too.

Masonry has long promoted and taught the Seven Sciences (the Seven Liberal Arts), and architecture was a primary science. In addition, the leaders in this era reinforced and maintained their positions of power by possessing and understanding knowledge that the wider population could not even imagine. To possess maps of the world and the Cosmos, or understand the necessary mathematics to construct vast temples or calculate Lunar and Solar eclipses, were all powerful indications of special status and sacred powers, and Jesus-Izas probably possessed many of these attributes. He is even said to have gone into the wilderness for 40 days and nights, which is a sure sign that he was

initiated into the secrets of Giza metrology and mathematics. As a reminder, the Great Pyramid is a 40-times multiple of the fractional equivalent of the Pi constant: 22 : 7.

The next thing to note is that the elliptical temple was a part of a complex, rather than a single building. To the south of the temple stood a bathhouse, while to the north was a standard barrack block just as the legionnaires themselves used. This is an unusual arrangement, for the fort already had a bathhouse and no other Roman military fortress had the luxury of two bathhouses. Similarly, barrack blocks were usually grouped together in cohorts comprising six hundred men, or a tenth of a legion. To have a single barrack block attached to a special temple is a unique design. As Prof Mason says:

In his descriptions, the excavator has rightly drawn attention to the similarity of its plan to that of the barrack block ... (however) legionary barracks were always laid out in pairs (three pairs for the six centuries of regular cohorts) ... Consequently, if a barrack at all, this building seems most unlikely to have been occupied by regular legionaries.²⁹

Quite! But if these were not regular legionaries, then who might have occupied such a prestigious site next to a temple, with their own bathhouse? The obvious implication is that this small quadrant in the Dewa fortress held a complete and separate community. Prof Mason speculates about there being an elite equestrian force based at Dewa, but finds little to support that hypothesis. Besides, it does not explain the aloof nature of the separate bathhouse, for this was obviously not only a community who would not live with the other

legionnaires but one that would not bathe with them either. If we are looking for a community within the Roman Empire who might insist on separate cooking and bathing facilities, we would not need to look much further than the Jewish community. But the reason for a Jewish community being located in a Roman fortress at the edges of the Empire would be unimaginable, were it not for the unique circumstances of the Jewish War, the destruction of Jerusalem and the possibility of political prisoners from that war needing to be housed in a location where they could cause no further trouble.

Again, the finger of evidence points towards King Jesus-Izas-Arthur of Gamala and some of the other revolutionaries from Syrio-Judaea being held in the Dewa fortress.

However, if this is so, then we can also estimate how many revolutionaries were incarcerated at Dewa. This particular barrack block was three-quarters the size of a normal barrack, in order to fit the space available (the communal, non-living space was deleted from the block). It measured 52.4 meters (or 100 tc) in length and was divided into fourteen rooms measuring 3.15×4.7 m and annexes measuring 3.15×2.35 m. Again we see the Egyptian heritage of this small quarter of the fort, as these measurements are better expressed in Egyptian Thoth cubits (tc) where they translate into 6×9 tc and 6×4.5 tc. At the end of the barrack block there was a double-sized room for the leader(s) of this community, which measured 9×9 tc, plus its equivalent annex.

These were not the

measurements that were used in the other barrack blocks, as the length of the standard block was 57.2 m and therefore did not conform to whole numbers of Egyptian cubits. Thus the temple barrack was unique in many respects, and the deliberate usage of Egyptian measurements in the temple barrack again points towards the Egyptian heritage of King Jesus-Izas of Gamala and his co-revolutionaries.

The regular barracks at Dewa were similar to the temple accommodation in having fifteen rooms in total, the main difference being that the standard barrack block had a large communal area at one end, making them a third longer again. There were supposed to be eight men per room in a standard Roman barrack, but if each block represented a sixth of a cohort, as is believed, then the number may

actually have been just seven per room (plus a separate room for the centurion). Seven men times fourteen rooms equals 98 men, plus the centurion equals 99 legionnaires per block (so one room would need eight occupants instead of seven). Six blocks would equal 600 men, which represents a full cohort, and this is how the blocks were arranged at Dewa and almost all other Roman forts.

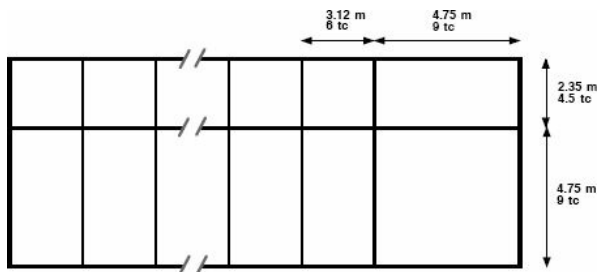


Fig 15.19 The temple barrack block at Dewa.

Having looked at the standard Roman

barrack in some detail, we can now assess how many people were accommodated in the Temple of the Zodiac's complex. Like the other barracks, the temple barrack contained fourteen standard rooms plus one larger room. At seven or eight people per room the complex could have housed the usual 100 people. But there is a distinct possibility that families were involved in this complex, and so the total may have been fourteen families plus the family of the community's leader – King Jesus-Arthur. But whatever the mix of people housed in the complex, we can safely assume that the total will not be very far from the standard 100.

Inscription

Another tantalising piece of evidence

is provided for us by the Dewa 'Old Market Hall' inscription. The inscription was finely carved on Welsh slate, which is a perfect stone for fabricating prestigious engravings. The few fragmented remains of this inscription were found just to the north of the *principia*, the fort's headquarters, and so they may have fallen from this building. However, it is thought that the original *principia* was constructed in wood, and so the presence of a slate sign above its entrance seems incongruous. However, the site for these fragments was also just to the east of the Temple of the Zodiac, and since this was almost the only stone construction in the original building phase, and certainly the most prestigious building in the fortress, it is entirely possible that the inscription fell from the temple.

Although it is highly fragmented, the primary reason for thinking that this inscription came from the Temple is that the inscription is written in prose. Professor Mason says of this peculiarity:

Inscriptions of this type are comparatively scarce ... it therefore seems very likely to belong to the administrative class of inscription, generally written out in full ... which were set up as a public record of official decisions taken at the highest level of government.³²

These official pronouncements covered topics like ‘the political and constitutional status of communities and the provisions for their internal regulation’, and this is exactly the kind of role that I envisage for an inscription over the entrance to the Temple of the Zodiac, as we shall see.

Another reason for thinking that

these fragments came from the temple is that the first word that can be made out ends in ...*missa*. Now if this was the entire word, rather than just the suffix, it may well refer to the Missa – the Roman Catholic Mass. Now this would be interesting, for it would be the earliest mention of the Catholic Mass anywhere, and by a considerable margin.

The Catholic Encyclopaedia claims that Missa was derived from *missio* meaning ‘dismiss’ which is said to refer to the congregation being dismissed from the church service at the end of the Mass. This sounds rather bland to me, and a more likely derivation might well be *missa* meaning ‘throw’, ‘hurl’ or ‘cast out’. This would not be the throwing of missiles, of course, but the hurling of invective (curses or foul language).

Anyone who has attended a sermon by a firebrand preacher will readily understand what I am meaning here. I well remember my junior-school headmaster, who was also a priest, hurling abuse at his congregation with spittle issuing forth at great velocity; which is why he was universally known as Gobby Gilbert. Indeed, he similarly castigated the assembled parents at the Christmas service for not singing as loud as the choir, and when he had finished the parents were ashen-faced, while myself and the rest of the choir chortled under our cassocks.

But it is not just Victorian or Northern Irish priests who like to rant and rave, it is a rather common trait among the pious and righteous, who place themselves and their opinions above the common people. Take King Jesus, for instance, who rounded upon

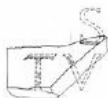
his disciples and shouted:

And Jesus cautioned them, saying, 'Take heed, beware of the yeast *13 of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod.' And the disciples discussed it with one another, saying, 'It means we have no bread.' ... And being aware of it, Jesus said to them, 'Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?' B33

Ouch! Some of the disciples were a little dense at the best of times, but here they are confusing the yeast (the creed or wisdom) of the opposition sects with the yeast in a loaf of bread! Oh dear, no wonder King Jesus exploded into a fit of rage at their idiocy.

There is little doubt that some of the preaching by early missionaries could be both assertive and

controversial, which is why Saul-Josephus was beaten and stoned on many occasions during his grand tours of the Mediterranean. People's fundamental beliefs were not about to be changed by simpering whispers, they required assertive oratory and it is from this firebrand invective that the Catholic Mass (*missa*) was named.



*Fig 15.20 Fragments of the slate inscription
from Dewa. (Chester Archaeology)*

This gives us the rather interesting possibility that the beginning of the Dewa inscription refers to a religious mass, a word that is intimately linked to Catholicism and therefore to the Church of Simple Judaism. But it was not only Saul-Josephus who convened firebrand services for his congregations, for King Jesus was equally capable, as we have just seen. Thus the Mass is likely to have started with the Galilean Sect, and with the congregations of Jesus himself.

But if the first word that we have in this inscription may refer to the Mass, the second word is equally interesting. This begins with *div...* and the Latin word that springs to mind here is *divus* meaning ‘sacred’ or

‘divine’. In other words, the first two words that we have in this tantalising fragment may refer to a ‘sacred mass’. But there are several other possibilities for this translation, as we shall see.

It is such a shame that we do not possess any more of this inscription, which may well have graced the portico of the Temple of the Zodiac, as we will never really know what it says from the fragments that have been discovered. However, we have a number of other words on the inscription, so by analysing these as well we may be able to divine the spirit of the inscription, to sense its general import. The other possible word combinations are as follows:

Inscription	Possibility	Meaning I pardon
-------------	-------------	---------------------

		<u>remissi</u>
		place u
	submissa	submit, <u>submis</u>
	missa	Christi <u>mass</u>
div...	diva	goddess
	divus	sacred, <u>divine</u>
	divum	sky, heaven
		military
castris	castrum	camp, f <u>castle</u>
qva...	quadrans	quarter <u>quadra</u>
	quadrum	square
	quaestor	tax- collect
	quaesitor	judge
		anythin
	qua	anyone

		anyone
		fitting,
...corus	decorus	proper,
		<u>decoru</u>
	amicorum	friendly
		<u>amicab</u>
	acorum	loyal
claus...	clausula	end, <u>cl</u>
		conclus
	clausum	<u>enclosu</u>
		against
...contra	contra	<u>contrar</u>
		opposi
		govern
regim...	regimen	<u>regime</u>
		ruler
...orum	acorum	loyal
	amicorum	friendly
		<u>amicab</u>
		public
	forum	space,
		market

fen...	fenestra	hole in wall, window entranc
perm...	permitto	<u>permit</u> , grant
	permissio	yield, <u>permis</u>
	permano	penetra <u>permea</u>
	permetior	measur

Note: Latin words that have percolated down into the English are underlined.

From all of the possible permutations and combinations of these translations, here are three versions of pertinent word-pairs that may have been used in this inscription:

mass -	submit -	under
--------	----------	-------

holy	divine	heave
fortress -	fortress -	fortress
quarter	judge	anyon
fitting -	amicable -	honoura
enclosure	end	-
against -	against -	conclus
regime	government	against
market -	this -	against
entrance	entrance	governm
penetrated	granted	this -
		entranc
		permiss

It is frustrating in the extreme that we have so little of this inscription to work with. However, perhaps from these few snippets of text we can judge the general import of the inscription. The most certain word-pairs within these translations are ‘honourable end’, ‘against the regime’, and ‘this entrance’, plus the fact that the opening line of the inscription refers to

something sacred or pertaining to the heavens. Thus one possible interpretation might be that:

there is something sacred,
in this quarter of the camp,
(something) has ended
amicably,
(but had been) against the
regime,
and this entrance,
may or may not have
permission granted.

This is only a tantalising glimpse at the whole message, but the general gist of the inscription does indeed fit in with what we know of the history of King Jesus and the other leaders of the Galilean Sect:

- a. they may well have convened the first Galilean Mass (or the Temple was indeed sacred),
- b. they most definitely had been against the Roman regime,
- c. but if they were now in a forced exile in Dewa, then perhaps this was indeed an honourable conclusion to the hostilities,
- d. and permission to enter the doorway of the Temple is highly likely to have been restricted.

Thus the inscription may have been a declaration that the Roman government

had decreed, to the otherwise hostile legionnaires, that the *Pax Romana* most definitely applied to this crowded and fractious multitude of peoples in this small fort. Legionnaires were not to enter the Temple of the Zodiac without permission. This was most definitely a ‘decision taken at the highest level of government’, which is what this type of prose inscription was used for, and which is why I think that this inscription came from the Temple. In fact, this decree had come from Emperor Vespasian himself.

Sacred Stones

As was mentioned earlier, the archaeologists at Chester have speculated that the central element in the Temple of the Zodiac was a large ornamental fountain, primarily because

of the expensive lead water pipe that ran to the exact center of the Temple. But the vast majority of temples around the Empire were built to honour a god, not a fountain, and so the central image ought to be an icon of that god. And if this really was a Temple of the Zodiac, then the obvious icon would be an image of the Sun-god, in whatever guise one likes, for the Sun lies at the center of the apparent zodiac as we see it from the surface of the Earth. Thus a statue of Helios or Sol Invictus may have graced the center of the Temple.

But King Jesus-Izas-Arthur was Egypto-Judaic, not Roman, and so the form of the central icon for the Temple of the Zodiac might have been rather different. In fact, there may have been no central icon at all, for the Temple of Jerusalem was supposed to contain nothing at all, after the Ark of the

Covenant was taken by King Solomon's son, Menelek. However, Jesus was Galilean, not orthodox Judaeon, and so he may have had radically different ideas.

Even the Ark of the Covenant was said to contain sacred stones, upon which there was inscribed some sacred texts, and this lithic imagery is rather common in the biblical accounts. From the era of the United Monarchy we find this description:

And also Maakhah his mother he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol (a phallus) in a grove. And Asa destroyed her idol (the phallus), and burnt it by the brook Kidron.^{B34} (my brackets)

Queen Maakhah was the daughter of Absalom, the son of King David, and the idol she was venerating was actually a *miphletseth* מפלצת: a *priappus*, a *phallus*, a penis. This

might seem like a deliberately provocative translation, but this explanation actually comes straight from the 1832 biblical Concordance by the venerable theologian, Adam Clarke, as I relate in the book *Solomon*. But what was this Judaic phallus made of? A verse in Genesis might help us here:

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.^{B35}

The ‘pillar’ that Jacob anointed in this ceremony was actually a *matseba* מצבה, which can also look more like a small pyramid than a pillar. Bearing in mind Queen Maakhah’s exploits, it is highly likely that this was again a phallus, but here it is said to be made of stone. So the general shape and structure of these

icons becomes obvious, they were stone mounds that looked rather phallic. They were dome-shaped or perhaps obelisk-shaped, and here again we see links to Egypt and to the sacred phallic (conical) Benben stone of Heliopolis.

However, it is not simply in the Tanakh, the Old Testament, that we find references to sacred biblical stones. The Egyptian heritage of King Jesus-Izas ensured that the New Testament was similarly associated with stones and Egyptian theology. The Epistle to the Ephesians says of Jesus:

You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus himself being the chief corner stone.[B36](#)

Yet this symbology of Jesus-Izas being the foundation stone came directly from the traditions of masonic Egyptian



theology and the Benben stone of Heliopolis, as this verse from the Gospel of Luke demonstrates:

Whosoever comes to me ... is like a man which built a house (a temple), and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.^{B37}

This is not a verse about a private house and a stream, a forerunner of the children's *Three Little Pigs* nursery rhyme, it is actually a veiled repetition of the Egyptian creation myth of the Primeval Mound –



Fig 15.21 The Omphalos of Delphi, a fourth century BC copy of the original.

the Benben
 stone
that rose within the
watery chaos of
Nu . Within

*Compare this
stone to the
Omphalos of
Ireland in the
next chapter.*

Judaean traditions the house in
question was no longer situated at
Heliopolis in the Nile Delta, but
actually referred to the Temple of
Jerusalem itself. The Temple was built
upon this very rock, the Foundation
Stone on the Temple Mount that resides
beneath the Dome of the Rock to this
day. That is what this verse refers to,
the Temple of Jerusalem.

However, within Egyptian
traditions, it was thought that the
primordial powers of these same
'foundation stone' rocks could resist
the watery chaos of Nu that surrounds
us all. This is why all Egyptian
temples were surrounded by a great

wave-shaped mud-brick wall, which represented the waters of Nu and which simultaneously physically held back the Nu-like waters of the Nile floods. Within Jewish tradition this stone was called the Shetiya, the foundation stone of the Temple mentioned in the Talmud (Yoma 5:2). A translation of *shetiya* is not contained in the biblical Concordance, but in the circumstances it is highly likely that the name was derived from *shetef* שֶׁטַף meaning 'flood'. Thus, like the Benben Primeval Mound, the Judaic Shetiya was also linked to the primeval flood myth.

In many traditions, including the Book of Revelations (Rev 2:17) the Shetiya stone was said to be white, as was the sacred black stone at Mecca before the kisses of the faithful supposedly turned it black (another

good reason for not kissing it, one would have thought). But the whiteness of this stone has to be doubted, because the term being used in Revelations is *leukos* λευκος; which can also mean 'brilliance', and so the reference to 'whiteness' probably referred to the stone 'shining'. But the stone did not physically shine, this was simply a reference to the *shetiya* being a Sun-stone, just as the Omphalos and the Benben were Sun-stones. But since the *shetiya* was said to have been the foundation stone in the Temple of Jerusalem, and these various sacred stones all seem rather similar, it does seem possible that a Sun-stone of some nature may have once resided in the Jerusalem Temple.

Jesus-Izas, being an Egyptian prince and king in exile, was an heir to these same great and ancient traditions,

which included the veneration of the Benben-Omphalos stone. This is why Simon Boethus, the father of Mary Magdalene, was called Shetah in the Talmud (as we saw earlier), a reference that firmly links the veneration of the sacred Shetiya-Benben-Omphalos Sun-stones with the family of Jesus and with the Temple.^{T38} Note also that the disciple who Jesus rejected, in the following paragraph from the Talmud, got upset and set up a stone to worship instead:

One day while (Rabbi Jesus) was reciting the Shema, his disciple came before him. Jesus' intention was to receive him and he made a sign to him with his hand, but the disciple thought he was repelling him. So he went and set up a stone and worshipped it.^{T39}

Again, we see that the veneration of a sacred stone was a central component of the creed of the Galilean Sect, for


when Jesus ‘rejected’ this disciple, he set up his own version of the Shetiya-Benben stone. In the following pages we shall see some contemporary images of Sun-stones, and these are indeed conical and phallic, just as the biblical texts describe. Such a stone would, of course, be quite heavy and require substantial foundations to support it, and later we shall see evidence of similar *betyl* stones weighing up to ten or more tonnes. Was this the central god-figure that lay at the center of the Dewa Temple of the Zodiac? A conical, phallic Sun-stone augmented by some kind of water feature?

A clue to this might be found in the history of Egypt, where one of the central icons of veneration was the conical Benben stone of Heliopolis, a meteoric rock of great significance and

veneration. A similar conical stone icon, which was known as the Omphalos stone, once stood in the Temple of Delphi in Greece, and this was said to have descended from the sky in a similar fashion to the Benben. The original Omphalos was decorated with what might be described as a 'fishing net' made of sea shells or seeds which was placed over it, which is why the copy of the stone looks like it does. Legends say that the original was taken from Delphi in the fourth century BC, and that the example in the Delphi museum is a very early marble copy of the original.

But there are yet more sacred stones to be unearthed, for Callisthenes, the historian of Alexander the Great, said that Alexander consulted an Omphalos stone at the Siwa Oasis, during his

campaigns across Egypt and Persia. In fact, Alexander might have been comparing the relative history and merits of the Omphalos at Siwa in comparison to the stone at Delphi, to see which was the more trustworthy in divination. It may also have been Alexander who took the Delphi stone on its eventual journey eastwards towards Persia, as the dates are rather coincident.

But if the central god-figure in the Temple of the Zodiac followed in this Egypto-Judaeo-Greek form of veneration and was also a conical, phallic Sun-stone, then how do we explain the presence of the lead water pipe? Well, as we have seen, the Benben Sun-stone was the Primeval Mound, the first pillar of light and order that thrust its way through the watery mass of Nu  to form the

first island of reason and order in amongst the elementary chaos of the cosmos. Any recreation of this moment of cosmic birth would therefore require a phallic Sun-stone and a supply of water.

In addition, the architect of Dewa might also have been trying to reproduce the sacred fountain of Aphaca, whose associated Ashtoreth cult may have been influenced by this very same Egyptian creation myth. We will see in the next chapter that King Jesus was closely associated with the Syrian cult of Ashtoreth (Isis), which is why he asked for volunteers for castration in Matthew 19:12. Not much is known about this influential cult, but it was said that a fiery star had descended into the pool of Aphaca, and this description links the Aphaca fountain with the cult of the meteoric

Benben-Omphalos stones; especially since the most famous of these meteoric *betyl* stones came from the very same region in Syria as Jesus-Isas himself.⁴⁰

Significantly, there was a large ornamental fountain in the city of Palmyra that was dedicated to the fountain at Aphaca; so the cult of the sacred fountain and the cult of the meteoric *betyl* stone were both central components of Palmyran worship. We even know who maintained this Palmyran fountain, as an inscription says that this honour was given to someone called Bolanus.⁴¹ It may also be significant that it was Constantine, the emperor who promoted Christianity into a state religion, who destroyed the Temple of Aphaca and its sacred fountain. Christianity was still in the process of cleansing its Egypto-

Gnostic past.

This may seem like a leap in the dark, to hypothesize that a conical Sun-stone phallus and its associated fountain once stood in the center of the Temple of the Zodiac, from such sparse information, but more evidence and a full description of this particular meteoric Sun-stone will be forthcoming in the next chapter.

Second temple

Another point of interest has to be the final fate of the Temple of the Zodiac and its central sacred monument, for this is very pertinent to this investigation. Surprisingly, this magnificent temple, which must have cost so much in terms of labour and materials at a time when the Roman state was still struggling to establish

itself in Britain, only lasted for about twenty years.

The archaeologists at the Chester site indicate that the temple was never finished, and was only ever built to the level of a dozen or so courses above the foundations. Their evidence for this is the fact that the drain for the central fountain was never recut and the foundations and first few courses of masonry on this site were deliberately covered with rubbish. However, there is a problem with this scenario, and that is the undoubted fact that the temple was rebuilt on its original site some 120 years after the original building had been destroyed. The pertinent question here is whether anyone would rebuild a temple that had never been built in the first place? Would a set of foundations have ingrained itself within the public

psyche, so that a later priesthood would want to rebuild these foundations? I would rather think not. However, had a magnificent, and fully completed, temple been destroyed by opposition forces, then yes, there may well have been a public outcry and a movement to restore that glorious edifice.

The evidence for this alternative scenario can be seen in the foundations of the first Temple of the Zodiac, for it is certain that all of the bases to the internal pillars were originally in place. The stone bases of these pillars were set into wet concrete foundations, and they therefore left their impressions in the concrete. Most of these stone bases have been removed and reused in other building projects, but the telltale impressions in the concrete show that they were all laid

in the first place. Therefore we know that stone has been pillaged from the first Temple of the Zodiac, so why not, in this case, presume that the entire column has gone missing, instead of just the base? Indeed, why not assert that the entire temple has been pillaged, from roof-tiles to foundation stones? This temple did, after all, represent the finest stonework in the whole of the Dewa fortress, and so if the temple had fallen prey to opposition forces, its very structure and ornamentation would have represented a valuable prize.

And what of that drain, which was never recut? How could a monument, which included piped water, have operated without a drain? The answer to this is to be found in the Temple Scroll of the Essene sect in Qumran. This great list of intricate

edicts say of the laver, the ritual basin that stood outside the temple:

You shall make a trench around the laver (basin), and the trench shall go from the laver to a cavity. It shall descend rapidly to the ground where the water shall flow and disappear. It shall not be touched by any man for it is mingled with the blood of the holocaust.⁴²

The pertinent point here is that the waste water could not be touched by human hand, and especially by Gentile Roman hands, and so the Roman engineer's design at Dewa for a drain that ran outside the temple was completely unacceptable. The alternative system, which can be found under the center of the Temple of the Zodiac, is exactly as the Temple Scroll dictates, a trench that ran steeply to a soakaway underneath the temple's central monument. This text solves the

mystery of the filled-in drain, and the trench full of sandy clays that lay beneath the central monument, and so the lack of an outside drain in no way implies that the temple was never completed. But, whether it was fully completed or not, why was the Dewa Temple of the Zodiac destroyed so quickly?

Actually, there are good reasons for opposition forces to have gained the upper hand at Dewa at the turn of the second century AD. Firstly, we have the death of King Jesus-Izas-Arthur, which some early theologians, like Bishop Irenaeus, place in the first years of the rule of Emperor Trajan, or about AD 101. This date would fit the known facts about the fate of the Temple of the Zodiac very well. Secondly, Legion II Adiutrix,^{*14} which may have been instrumental in the

fabrication of the Temple of the Zodiac, were moved out to Pannonia in the 90s AD. Pannonia resides on the borders of modern Yugoslavia, Romania and Hungary, and the modern town of Dewa (Deva) in this region, which is surrounded by the Transylvanian mountains, claims that its name was derived from the Dewa fortress in Chester.⁴³ The removal of the legion that helped build the Temple of the Zodiac would again make the structure more vulnerable.

Had there been exiled rebels from the Galilean Sect in Dewa, including King Jesus-Arthur, as I have proposed, their presence may have been deeply resented by opposition groups within the army. In fact, there may have been any number of opposition creeds and religions within the Dewa fort, plus a significant

number of soldiers who had lost comrades in the Jewish War; and many of these groups may have been completely perplexed and angered by the Emperor's insistence that these Egypto-Judaic rebels should be given sanctuary within the Empire and allowed to build great monuments to their peculiar religion in a Roman fortress. It would be entirely understandable that once the leadership of this sect had been eliminated; or their sympathetic legion had been moved away; or the sympathetic Flavian line of emperors had ended, that the Temple of the Zodiac would come under attack. That attack was comprehensive and meticulous, with all the valuable stonework being removed and only the concrete foundations and a few low walls remaining, and the site being

deliberately overlaid with rubbish. This final act demonstrates a clear hatred for a particular community or sect, for this valuable space in the very center of the Dewa fortress that this site represented was not reused; it was instead designated as the camp's rubbish-dump. A deliberate ignominy, I feel.

However, given this obvious opposition to the Temple of the Zodiac and the apparent deep hatred of the temple's supporters and priests, it is rather bizarre that someone should then conceive its resurrection some 120 years later. This second temple is now known as the Severan Elliptical Building (the Severan Temple of the Zodiac), after the Roman dynasty that ruled during the era in which it was constructed. However, while the concept of a second temple might

appear peculiar, the ancestry of the Emperors who ruled at this time may give us all the necessary clues as to why this should have happened; and also provide a further explanation for why I argued that the first temple contained a sacred Sun-stone as its central monument.

The Severan dynasty began with Septimius Severus, who was born in Leptis Magna, a major Roman city that lies to the southeast of Carthage in North Africa. If that may seem like an unlikely origin for an Emperor interested in Egypto-Judaic theology, then I refer readers back to the book *Cleopatra*. I explain there that Jubba II of Mauretania (N Africa) was given Cleopatra Selene, the daughter of Queen Cleopatra, as a diplomatic wife by Emperor Augustus. In addition, it would appear that Ptolemy of

Mauretania, the son of this Egypto-Mauretanian royal union, married Julia Ourania – the lady who I maintain was the mother of Jesus of Gamala, which is probably why we find strong similarities in fashions and religious symbolism between Emesa and Carthage. Emesa was the influential theocratic city on the river Orontes in Syria, known today as Homs (Hims), which lies just to the west of Palmyra.

The descendants of this union, in generations beyond Mary Magdalene and Jesus-Izas, became very influential in the Emesan theocracy. Following in this same tradition of a union between north Africa and Judaeo-Syria, Septimius Severus of Mauretania also married a Syrio-Judaeian priestess, called Julia Domna of Emesa. Note the retention of the Julia family name. Septimius Severus married well, for

the Emesan royalty were descended from the illustrious Egyptian royal line, as we have seen.

When looking for links between this royal family of Emesa and the Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa we find that in AD 191, before he became emperor, Septimius Severus was posted to Carnuntum, the capital of Pannonia. This is the very same region that the Second Legion from Dewa was sent to in the 90s AD. He then married Julia Domna and having become emperor of the Roman Empire the couple embarked on a tour of Palestine and Egypt. With Julia being descended from Queen Cleopatra of Egypt and a princess of Emesa, this tour is entirely understandable. Emperor Severus then invaded Parthia, the traditional enemy of the Ourania family. Note that these were the very locations around which

the fundamental beliefs of the Galilean Sect were incubated. Finally, Emperor Septimius Severus took a tour of Britain, dying in York in AD 211.

While the second Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa could have been built during the reign of Emperor Severus, it is more likely to be the inspiration of one of his successors – for if the life of Septimius Severus parallels the origins of the Galilean creed that created the first Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa, the life of one of his descendants and successors almost merges with it completely. I refer here to Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, another of the Severan (Emesan) dynasty who is known to history as Elagabalus: a highly controversial emperor who was considered by his detractors to be even more insane than Nero. Elagabalus was born in Syria, the son of Julia

Sohaemus (Soemias), who was a descendant of Julia Ourania. The former was a princess of the Emesan royal family, the same royal line that has crossed our path on so many occasions on this journey.

Despite his young age, Elagabalus was also a dedicated and pious high priest of the Emesan phallus-god – the sacred Sun-stone called the Elagabal, from which Elagabalus derived his common name. We have already witnessed the influence of sacred phallic Sun-stones within Judaism, and it is this Elagabal Sun-stone from Emesa that will become important in deciding exactly who built these temples to the zodiac at Dewa, and whether King Jesus-Arthur was really incarcerated there.

Summary

The Dewa Fortress in Chester, England, was built in an extremely remote location of questionable military value, a site that nevertheless conforms to the descriptions of the Grail castle of Munsalvasche-Corbenic.

The Dewa fortress was designed as a Vesica Piscis, a representation of the constellation of Pisces. It was also a Temple of the Zodiac, and quite unlike any other Roman building.

The Dewa Temple of the Zodiac was designed in Egyptian units of measure. This, together with the astrology, points to an Egypto-Judaean design within a Roman fortress.

here is a description of Jesus' trial before Vespasian, after the fall of Jerusalem. Jesus is described as being lame, partially blind and with a dislocated shoulder, just as one might expect after a crucifixion.

Jesus may have been castrated and exiled to Dewa, at the opposite end of the Empire, to prevent any further uprisings in Judaea.

The Dewa fortress has the same name as the Welsh Saint David (Sant Dewi), so Dewa means 'David'.

Since Jesus was of the line of David, so the Dewa Fortress may have been named after its exiled, royal prisoner.

The Dewi dragon symbology of the

Welsh flag has the same etymological foundations as Dewa, and may also be connected with the symbolism of the Lion of Judah.

he central icon in the Temple of the Zodiac may have been an Egypto-Judaic Sun-stone.

he Temple of the Zodiac was comprehensively destroyed by opposition forces at the end of the first century.

he Temple of the Zodiac was rebuilt in the early third century, when a Roman emperor with distinct Egypto-Judaic sympathies reigned.

Ddraig Goch a ddyry Gychwyn means 'the Red Dragon will show the way'.

*1 This is an over-simplification. The *vesica* may refer to the *viscera*, the intestines, and in Egypto-Islamic terms the intestines refer to a coiling or circling movement.

*2 (Previous page.)

Only the Douay Rheims, Rotherham, and Twentieth Century New Testaments say 72, while all the others say 70. The tradition of 72 disciples came from Jerome's Latin Vulgate New Testament, which was written in AD 405.

*3 It is entirely possible that the six ancient synagogues in Israel and Jordan, which date from the early centuries AD and contain mosaic zodiacs, were all influenced by the remnants of the Galilean Sect rather than the more orthodox Sadducees or Pharisees.

*4 The arc of the temple bisects exactly 142 degrees at the center of the layout circle. This was calculated mathematically assuming an entrance width of 3.5 tc and wall thickness of 1.25 tc. Thus the arc of the courtyard is 99 tc long (in circumference).

*5 There was another large colonnaded courtyard, measuring some 160×65 m, that lies just north of the *principia* or headquarters building and just opposite (east of) the Temple of the Zodiac. The colonnade of this courtyard was also made in concrete and fine stonework, at a time when the all-important *principia* was still being fabricated in wood. This long courtyard does not feature within any other Roman fortress because it is very wasteful of space, and so its function is a complete mystery. However, the courtyard was definitely connected with the Temple of the Zodiac in some manner, and one of the reasons for its construction may have been to segregate the people who used it from the rest of the fortress.

It may or may not be significant that the rectangular building inside this courtyard measures about 60×20 cubits, which happen to be the dimensions of the Temple of Jerusalem. Surprisingly, for all the superlatives that are lavished upon the

Jerusalem Temple, it was actually quite modest in size. It is possible, therefore, that this vast courtyard represents a reproduction Temple Mount, complete with its own copy of King Solomon's (or King Herod's) Temple.

*6 The references in the Talmud call this 'cripple' Balaam, which is a well-known Talmudic pseudonym for Jesus. The name Balaam comes from *bal* בַּעַל and *am* אֵם meaning 'Lord of the People'. However, if we look at this title from the context of the Jesus of the gospels, it obviously means 'King of the Jews', for that is exactly what the New Testament calls Jesus. Thus 'Balaam' is most certainly a hypocorism for Jesus.

*7 The reference to Jesus performing 'enchantment' with his penis is probably a reference to the Hieros Gamos Ἱερός Γάμος, or the Holy Wedding. The Hieros Gamos is a sacred wedding of the gods, designed to bring fertility to the nation and the land; but perhaps 'marriage' is misleading here, for the essential element was sexual intercourse. Sometimes this included a coupling between humankind and the gods, as I have already described for the duties of the Egyptian priestesses known as God's Wife. As the name suggests, sex was an important part of this priestess' duties; but since the god in question, Atum,

created the world through masturbation rather than intercourse, the priestesses managed to remain 'virgins'. This, I have already speculated, was the role of Mary Magdalene, which is why she was given the title of Mary the Phallus (Magdalene means 'tower'). See the book *Solomon* for details.

However, it is likely that the high priest took on the role of the god, and so the Hieros Gamos became the sacred sexual intercourse of the priest and priestess. This ritual of sacred sex was the basis of the reports of 'orgiastic rites' that occurred in many temples across the east. But we don't have to look to the 'Paganism' of Egypt or Greece to find the rite of the Hieros Gamos, for all the Judaic religions were originally 'Pagan', before they had an outbreak of puritanism and prudishness. The standard Torah (Old Testament), for instance, contains the Song of Songs, which says: PTO

Notes continued:

The man calls to his love:

Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove,
my undefiled;

She is flustered:

I have taken off my robe. Indeed, must I
put it on?

I have washed my feet, must I soil them
again?

My beloved thrust his hand in through the latch opening. My heart pounded for him.

I rose up to open for my beloved. My hands dripped with myrrh,

My fingers with liquid myrrh, On the handles of the lock.

I opened to my beloved.

The man admires his love:

How beautiful are your feet in sandals, prince's daughter!

Your rounded thighs are like jewels, The work of the hands of a skillful workman.

Your body is like a round goblet, No mixed wine is wanting.

Your waist is like a heap of wheat, Set about with lilies.

Your two breasts are like two fawns, That are twins of a roe.

Your neck is like an ivory tower. Your eyes are like the pools in Heshbon.

Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon which looks toward Damascus.

This, your stature, is like a palm tree, Your breasts like its fruit.

I said, 'I will climb up into the palm tree. I

will take hold of its fruit.’

And who wouldn't!

The bashful Judaic and Christian priesthood have declared that the Song of Songs is allegorical, that it refers to God consummating his covenant with Israel. However, it is fairly obvious that this is a manual for the Hieros Gamos, a sacred sexual encounter that took place within the center of the Temple of Jerusalem.

In the name of religion the ancient creeds, including Judaism, used to make real love. Sexual intercourse on the altar to the delight of the gods was *de rigueur*, but now the trend is more towards semtex and ball bearings. Somehow, I don't think that religion has matured well with age, and Islam was certainly not a vintage year.

*8 Castration may also have been a requirement of office for the Nazarene high priest, as we shall see in the next chapter.

*9 Incongruously, the recent *Pirates of the Caribbean* movie managed to depict a rather similar cosmic ‘explanation’ for Davy Jones’ Locker.

*10 Adam, Esau and King David were all said to be red. See Gen 25:25, 1Sam 16:12.

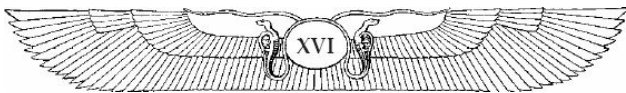
*11 Carausius was a third century Roman commander of Britain who briefly claimed Emperorship of Rome. He ruled shortly after the construction of the second Temple of the Zodiac, as is discussed in the next chapter.

*12 Caers (Chester) was also called Caerleon, the 'Castle of the Legions': the location of Arthur's coronation, according to Thomas Malory.

*13 The yeast, or leaven, refers to a creed or knowledge that spread among the people, as can be seen in Matt 13:33 and Matt 15:26. In the latter verse, the 'children's bread' refers to the 'disciple's knowledge', and while this explanation is not explicit from these verses, the much fuller version in the Gospel of Philip from the Nag Hammadi Scrolls makes this point perfectly clear.

*14 Although the records are confused, it would appear that there were two Adiutrix legions established between AD 68 and AD 70. Legion I Adiutrix is said to have been founded by Nero, while Legion II Adiutrix was founded by Vespasian, and it was this legion that supported both Vespasian's claim to the emperor's throne and also the claim of the

later Septimius Severus, who becomes an important player in this saga later in the next chapter. The name ‘Adiutrix’ means ‘helper’, which rather distances these two legions from the regular army, and they were said to have been composed exclusively of ‘mariners’. While historical reports indicate that these completely land-based troops were formed from sailors based at Misenum and Ravenna, I cannot help noticing a link here to King Jesus of Gamala’s troops, who were also called ‘mariners’. This latter designation had nothing to do with their naval origins, of course, and everything to do with astrology and the constellation of Pisces.



Britannia and America

The Elagabal was the sacred Sun-stone of the high priests of Byblos and Emesa, and it became a hugely influential Roman cult in the early third century AD, finally spawning the cult of Sol Invictus, the Invincible Sun. Christianity later inherited many of the attributes of the Elagabal or Sol-Invictus, including the Sun-like halos of the saints and the date for the (re)birth of the Sun celebration on the 25th December. This celebration was not entirely the winter solstice, which is

on the 21st of December; instead it is the day upon which the position of the dawn Sun starts to move back towards the north. When this happens, the Sun has conquered winter and it remains the Invincible Sun, the Sol Invictus.

But what was the Elagabal Sun-stone itself, and why would a Roman emperor name himself after this sacred stone?

*1 And is it possible, one might also ask, that this same stone was somehow connected with the Temple of the Zodiac in Chester, England?



Fig 16.1 The saintly Sun-rays of Sol Invicta. Compare this with the image of the Palmyrian god Yahibol in Chapter XII.

The first thing to explore is the size and shape of the Elagabal stone, for that may have a bearing on later investigations. Just what did these sacred stones look like? As we saw in the last chapter, it is likely that the earliest sacred stone to be venerated was the Benben of Heliopolis in Egypt. The Benben was the Primaeval Mound that rose from the watery chaos and created our world of order; it was the sacred mound upon which the Phoenix alighted at Heliopolis, and it was reputed to have been of meteoric origin. Images of this mound are often stylised, and so we don't have a clear picture of what it originally looked like. Some images from Egypt show the Phoenix on a pyramidal structure, which indicates that all Egyptian obelisks are imitations of the sacred Benben. Others show a more rounded

mound breaking the watery chaos, indicating that the Benben was distinct from the standard obelisk. So what did the Benben stone look like, was it pyramidal or cone-shaped?

The Omphalos stone of Delphi might give us a clue and this sacred stone was certainly rounded, as we have seen in the previous chapter. The Omphalos was also slightly more cylindrical than a pure cone-shape: it has been designed to take on a phallic symbolism and so this particular stone does not quite fit the descriptions that circulate of a sacred conical Benben stone of Heliopolis. Likewise, the Hindu Lingam stones are also tall and rounded, and often they are completely oval too. We shall look at the sacred Lingam in more detail shortly. The cult of the sacred stone had obviously spread far and wide, and so there are

many other examples to research and compare.

There was also the black stone of Paphos, which can be seen in the museum at Kouklia, Cyprus. However, although this stone is quite large, measuring some 1.5 by 0.7 m, it is actually a lump of common basalt rather than being meteoric. This Omphalos is obviously a poor copy of the more exotic original.

Within Dar al-Islam, the Lands of Submission, we still bizarrely have a similar veneration of a sacred black stone (or stones). And so, although Islam supposedly bans all idols, it is still a daughter religion of Egypto-Judaism and so two of its primary temples contain very similar sacred stones. The Ka'ba cube inside the Al-Haram mosque at Mecca contains the Hajar al Aswad black stone(s), while

the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem also contains a stone, as the name might suggest.

In Judaic tradition the latter of these stones, the rock inside the domed temple on the Temple Mount, is the Foundation Stone: the stone from which the world was made, and the stone upon which the Ark of the Covenant once rested, as already discussed. In Islamic terms, this same rock is said to be the stone from which Muhammad ascended into heaven. However, if we cut through all this theological bovine detritus, the bottom line is that the central sacred 'god-figure' in all of these Judaeo-Christio-Islamic temples is a rock. Thus the cult of the sacred stone was a central part of many belief systems around the ancient world, and a few remnants of that veneration have percolated down

into more contemporary belief systems, like Islam and Hinduism.

Having looked at the main sacred stones of this region, we still have not discovered the shape and form of the Elagabal stone from Syria, so what did this sacred stone look like? There may well be a contemporary description of this stone, for the Roman historian, Herodian of Antioch, says of the Elagabal:

No statue made by man in the likeness of a god stands in this temple, as in Greek or Roman temples. The temple does, however, contain a huge black stone with a pointed end and a round base in the shape of a cone. The Phoenicians*² solemnly maintain that this stone came down from Zeus (from the gods), they point out figures in relief (imperfections?) on the stone and say that it is an unwrought (natural) image of the Sun.¹

Here we have a description of a black, conical stone that looks something like



Fig 16.2 The Phoenix on a pyramidal Benben stone.

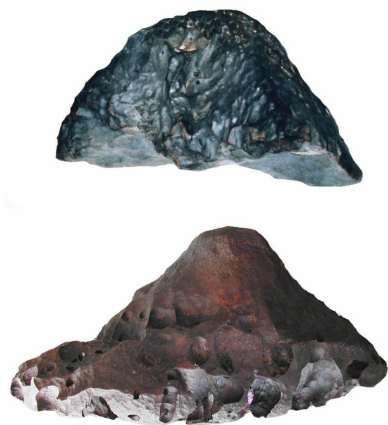
an early re-entry capsule from the American Apollo space missions, a stone that was supposed to have descended from the heavens in much the same fashion as the Apollo capsule did. It is said to have had a rough,

rather than a smooth, surface and it was apparently 'huge', whatever that means. Personally, my sense of 'huge' in relation to a single lump of rock would be about a meter across and one-and-a-half meters tall. Such a lump of rock would weigh a few tonnes, even more if it was metallic; dimensions and weights which are

definitely ‘huge-ish’ even in modern terms.

Actually, this ancient description of a large (metallic) object that fell from the skies does suit the known characteristics of a large iron-nickel meteorite. Take a look at the following images of ‘conical’ meteorites that have been discovered in more recent times. The Morito meteorite from Mexico measures about 1.7×2.0 m and weighs some 11 tonnes, while the Willamette from Oregon measures about 3.1×2.1 m and weighs some 15 tonnes. These are certainly impressive lumps of metal to have fallen from the sky as a fiery streak accompanied by thunder and a resounding crash, and they would have been even more impressive if they were subsequently found to be magnetic. Neither of these meteorites are magnetic to any great

degree, but some iron-nickels are strongly magnetic. There are also a few comments circulating on the internet that the Hajar al Aswad in Mecca is also magnetic, but that cannot be confirmed.



*Fig 16.3 The Morito iron-nickel meteorite
(above)
The Willamette iron-nickel meteorite
(below).*



The name of the Syrian sacred stone, the Elagabal, has caused some confusion among historians and theologians alike. The Greek version of this name is the Heliogabal and, as this name might suggest, the Elagabal was an icon of the Sun-god which was strongly linked to the generic Phoenician god, Baal. In Rome, this same god became known as Sol Invictus, the Invincible Sun, where it became a hugely influential cult, until it was crushed and absorbed by Christianity. In fact, the coins of Emperor Probus (c. AD 276 - 282) used exactly the same imagery as the Elagabal, with the god-figure riding in a stately chariot, but simply replaced the Sun-stone with a humanoid figure of Sol Invictus instead.

Some historians have interpreted the *gabal* portion of the Ela-gabal as

being linked to the city of Gebal on the Levantine coast, a city which is more popularly known by its Greek name of Byblos. However, this association is probably secondary, with the town being named after the stone that it was famous for – the coinage of Emperor Macrinus strongly indicates that the Elagabal stone was in Byblos (Gebal) during his reign, as we shall see shortly. However, the clue to the true meaning for the Elagabal is to be found in the name of the Egypto-Semitic Sun-god.

The most popular nominative prefix for this Sun-god stone was not the Greek Heli, but the Hebrew **אלה** and the Arabic Allah. The link to Allah is confirmed by the Aramaic rendition of Elagabal which was the Ilaha-gabal (Allah-gabal). Despite the vociferous protestations of both the

Jews and the Muslims, both Ela and Allah were and still are manifestations of the Egyptian Sun-god, Aton-Ra. The Hebrew Ela was also the root of the Greek Sun-god Heli, a name which can be spelt either as Helios ηλιος or Elios ελιος.

However, this Judaeo-Greek name was in turn derived from the Egyptian Ar (Al or El)  which referred to the Eye of Horus. The Eye of Horus was the Sun, and this name was itself a simple, witty reversal of the god-name Ra (La) , the Sun-god. (The Egyptian 'r' was often translated into a Semitic 'l'.) So, there was no mistranslation of the prefix to the Ela-gabal, from the supposedly bland Hebrew term 'god' to the more specific Greek term 'Heli' meaning 'Sun-god', as is often asserted in the reference books. The Hebrew term Ela

(Eli) and the Arabic name Allah both meant 'Sun-god' in the original Semitic languages, it is just that the Jews and Muslims are reluctant to admit that they are worshipping a solar deity.

But if the prefix to the name for the Elagabal Sun-god was derived from an Egypto-Hebrew word, then why not the *gabal* portion too? If we take this initiative, we find that *gabal* גבל means 'mountain' and so the name 'Elagabal' means 'Mountain of the Sun-god'. This is a translation that makes a great deal of sense. The Elagabal was specifically said by Cassius Dio to be a Sun-god; the stone itself was shaped like a small mountain; and the name itself was closely linked to the Semitic god Baal, who always inhabited mountains. Thus the Elagabal was a small hill of the Sun, and so in effect it is another term

for the Primaeval Mound, the Egyptian Benben stone of Heliopolis. Indeed, the Elagabal may have been the Benben itself, for the Benben went missing from Heliopolis many centuries before this time and nobody knows what became of it.

While the Semitic name for this Benben-like stone was most definitely adopted by Emperor Elagabalus, due to his pious veneration of the Elagabal, it is entirely possible that a much earlier line of kings or leaders did much the same thing. I refer here to the first century aristocracy of the increasingly influential city of Palmyra, the city from which King Jesus-Justus and Queen Mary Magdalene are likely to have originated. While Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70, Palmyra continued to flourish; and by the third century AD,

when Elagabalus became Emperor of Rome, it was a hugely influential city that went on to spawn the short-lived empire of Queen Zenobia. However, one of the richest and most influential families in Palmyra were the Elahbels, and their magnificent tower-tomb still stands outside the city to this day. Since Palmyra was also known for its veneration of sacred *betyl* stones, it is entirely possible that this name was also derived from the Elagabal, just as Emperor Elagabalus' was.

Zenobia

Incidentally, the life and reign of Queen Zenobia clearly demonstrates the close links that existed between Palmyra and Egypt. Queen Zenobia was an inveterate Egyptophile who claimed to be a descendant of

Cleopatra VII through Ptolemy of Mauretania – just as I have proposed for Queen Thea Muse Ourania and many of the Emesan royalty – and she was sometimes called Zenobia Cleopatra (Theoclea) in honour of this. Indeed, it is even said that Zenobia spoke fluent Egyptian and used the very same cutlery and crockery which had once belonged to Queen Cleopatra, in her Palmyran palace.² She was also descended from the Egypto-Persian Emesan royalty through Gaius Julius Sampsigeramus and Julius Bassianus. See the genealogy in fig 11.1 for further details. Note, however, that the exact details of Zenobia's ancestry are not fully understood and so variations from this genealogy can be found.

As we saw in a previous chapter, Palmyra is a remarkable desert city that still contains a vast

array of Romo-Greek remains, which demonstrates the great importance of this city in this era. Palmyra was a hugely independent city too; politically, economically and also in culture and scholarship, which is why great philosophers like Casius Longinus became advisors to Queen Zenobia (Queen Sabba).

It was from this capital city that Queen Zenobia formed a short-lived rebel empire that encompassed Syria, Asia Minor, Egypt and Greece. It is said that Zebedee, Zenobia's general, entered Egypt in AD 270 with a cavalry force that was reputed to be 70,000 strong (an exaggeration, no doubt) and annexed the entire country.³ Zenobia then declared herself to be the Queen of Egypt, an act that again demonstrates the close cultural and ancestral links that must have existed between the

Palmyran royalty and Egypt.⁴

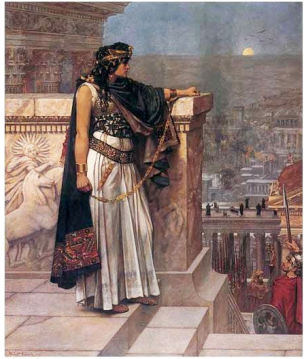


Fig 16.4 Queen Zenobia's last look upon Palmyra, by Herbert Schmalz.

Unfortunately for Zenobia, her strategy for domination of the entire Roman Empire did not go well. Emperor Aurelianus gathered the legions together and easily retook all of Asia Minor, and in AD 272 he advanced upon Palmyra, meeting little

resistance *en route*. The siege of Palmyra was protracted and violent, with the defenders terrorising and panicking the Roman legions by hurling molten tin at them, much as Moses had endured during his wars against the Canaanites. But the end result was not in doubt – the city fell, and Queen Zenobia (Sabba) was taken in golden chains to Rome. The Egyptian royal line of Akhenaton and Cleopatra had made their final overt bid for world domination, and failed.⁵

Emperor Elagabalus

We return now to the history of this eccentric young emperor, who ruled the Roman Empire at about the same time as the second Temple of the Zodiac was being constructed in the Dewa fortress in Chester, England.

This second Temple of the Zodiac, the Severan Temple as it is often called, was definitely completed and it remained in use until the demise of Roman Britain at the turn of the fifth century AD. The formal name of this young emperor was Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, another of the Severan (Emesan) dynasty from Emesa in Syria; but since Marcus Aurelius was also a very dedicated high priest of the Elagabal stone, he became known to posterity as Elagabalus.

Following Elagabalus' successful bid for the imperial purple, the sacred Elagabal stone was taken from Emesa to Rome, where an imposing new temple was built for it and where it became the subject of much veneration by the new ruling elite. As we have already seen, there were many such Omphalos-type stones

scattered around the Empire, but legend indicates that there was one original and very special such stone, and it seems to have been prized by many nations and cultures. It is entirely possible that the stone possessed by Elagabalus was that original – the Benben stone from Heliopolis in Egypt. There are many cultures and nations that have claimed ownership of this stone, but there is no reliable history that reports when or where this sacred stone was moved to. However, here is one possible scenario.

There were two major flights from Egypt by the Egypto-Judaic peoples: the Hyksos exodus in the seventeenth century BC and the exodus of Pharaoh Akhenaton in the fourteen century BC. Either of these migrations could have liberated the sacred Benben stone from Heliopolis in Egypt

and taken it to Greece (the book *Scota* details the links between the Akhenaton's Amarna dynasty and Greece). Evidence for a Benben Sun-stone in Greece has already been discussed. There it was called the Omphalos, and its cult, which dates from the sixth century BC, was centered on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi.

There was also a cult of a sacred *betyl* stone in Kaunos, Turkey, a city state inhabited by Phoenicians but ruled by Persia at this time. The Kaunos *betyls* date from the



Fig 16.5 Coin of Antiochus I Soter, showing the god Apollo seated on the Greek Omphalos (Elagabal) stone.

fifth century BC

and are more pyramidal than the Greek Omphalos stone. The stone's migration from Greece-Turkey to Persia may well have involved the great campaigns and conquests of Alexander the Great, in the fourth century BC. Evidence for the stone's presence in Persia comes from the Hellenistic Seleucid Empire, the new empire that the generals of Alexander the Great formed after his death in 323 BC. In the coins of the Antiochan kings of Seleucid (Greek) Persia we find a large number that show Apollo seated upon the Omphalos stone. Since there is a common link to Apollo here, this may well have been the same stone that was originally at Delphi and previously at Heliopolis. The image in fig 16.5 is of the reverse of a coin of Antiochus I Soter (c. 281 - 261 BC).

To explain the Benben-Omphalos' journey back to the Levant, perhaps the travels of Queen Thea Muse Ourania (and Queen Julia-Helena of Adiabene) and their family may provide a clue. Thea Muse was Queen of Persia for a number of years, before her exile to Syrio-Judaea, and it is not beyond the realms of possibility that it was through this route that the stone found itself heading back westwards towards the Levant. Thus the stone was in the Levant for the veneration of the Greco-Judaeans in the first century AD. Its location during that time is uncertain, but it most certainly came to be in the hands of the Severan dynasty of Emesa (modern Homs) during the third century AD. However, a temporary diversion of this stone to Britain in the late first century AD is not beyond the

realms of possibility, as the ‘Britannia’ coins of Emperor Hadrian demonstrate (these will be discussed in greater detail later).



Fig 16.6 Coin of Ouranius Antoninus, high priest of Emesa. This image probably represents the Elagabal temple in Emesa.

One of the many Emesan coins that bear the image of the sacred Benben-Omphalos-Elagabal stone was struck by Ouranius Antoninus^{*3} in the early third century AD (see fig 16.6). The exact date of Antoninus' reign is uncertain, but he was an Emesan high priest and king who reigned about the

same time that Elagabalus became emperor of Rome. However, since he and all the other Emesan priest-kings were descended in some manner from the Ouranian family, it is fitting that he was named after the most famous of his illustrious ancestors: Julia Ourania and Thea Muse Ourania. See the family tree in fig 11.1 for Emesan connections to Queen Cleopatra and the Egyptian royal family.

Here is the Elagabal Sun-stone once more – sacred enough to be on the royal coinage, and precious enough to be transported to Rome by Emperor Elagabalus as the primary god of the entire Roman Empire. As an aside, the legend on this coin says:

Antoninus Pius Fel Aug. (Mhtro) Kol
Emi(cwn) Hlia Puqi

This is shorthand for:

Antoninus Pius Felix Augustus. Metro Kolusia
Emicwn Heliagabal Pythiae

Antonious the Pious and Blessed Augustus
(Illustrious man). Mother Colony of Emesa
Elagabal of Delphi.

This coin's legend therefore closes the circle of travels for these stones, for it once more identifies the Elagabal Sun-stone with the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, so the Elagabal of Emesa probably came from Delphi.

Note, however, how this image of the Elagabal confirms the description of Herodian of Antioch, who said that the Elagabal had 'a pointed end and a round base in the shape of a cone'. That is exactly what the image shows, and so we know that the testimony of Herodian is reliable. Thus, we can assume that Herodian's descriptions of a rough, black surface and a huge size are also correct.

Note, also, that this imagery is rather similar to the design over the entrance to the Talpiot Tomb, which is located just to the south of Jerusalem. This is pertinent to this research because this particular tomb has been popularly linked to King Jesus, although the evidence for this is somewhat threadbare. The symbolism of the Elagabal in its temple is also very similar to the complete composition of the Carthaginian Tanit, with its accompanying Sun and Moon symbolism; but since Septimius Severus came from Leptis Magna, which is not too far from Carthage, perhaps this is not so surprising. There is also a definite resemblance to the Masonic all-seeing eye here. The reverse of the Great Seal of America is a good example of this eye and pyramid symbolism, and a copy of this

is presented at the end of this chapter.



Fig 16.7 The Talpiot Tomb (above), sometimes known as the Tomb of Jesus. The symbol over the entrance has similarities with the imagery of the Elagabal. In turn, the symbolism of the Talpiot Tomb bears a striking resemblance to the Carthaginian Tanit and its associated Sun and Moon imagery (below right). The Carthaginian symbolism predates the Emesan equivalent by a considerable margin.



As mentioned previously, this sacred Elagabal stone is likely to have been the stone that resided at Heliopolis; the stone that Jacob slept on; the stone from the Temple of Delphi; the stone of Seleucia; the stone of Emesa; the stone of the Hindu faith; the stone of the Temple of Jerusalem; and possibly even the stone that was supposed to have been taken to Scotland, where it became known as the Stone of Scone. A piece of this stone is also supposed to be the Hajar al Aswad, the fragmented black stone(s) that lie in the Ka'ba in Mecca.

The Elagabal was supposed to be of meteoric origin, a *betyl*, a fiery visitor from the Cosmos of the gods that landed here on Earth. In addition to this dramatic birth, the stone may have been magnetic too; it was a mysterious metallic rock that had a

‘thirst’ for legionnaires’ swords and spears. If this is so, then no wonder it was the subject of so much attention and veneration. Claudian says of these stones:

There is a sacred stone called the lodestone; black, dull, and common. It does not adorn the braided hair of kings nor the snowy necks of girls, nor yet shine in the jewelled buckles of warriors’ belts ... It lives on iron and feeds on its inflexible nature; iron is its food and nourishment; from iron it recruits its strength. This seemingly inedible food, circulating throughout its body, renews its hidden powers ... each deity has his own image; Mars, a polished iron statue, Venus, one fashioned of the lodestone.⁶

The exact identity of this particular sacred lodestone (a magnetic stone), which is said to have represented the goddess Venus (Isis, Astarte), is unknown, but the most likely source for this story is the black, meteoric

Benben-Omphalos-Elagabal stone, which has been venerated by countless kings, queens and emperors throughout the millennia. Indeed, such was the mystery of lodestone in general that *History of the Holy Grail* mentions an entire island made from lodestone, whose magnetism made the island turn in unison with the rotation of the heavens.⁷

It is likely that this same Benben lodestone was involved in early Egypto-Judaism, which is presumably why no iron was allowed near the Judaic altar:

And there shalt thou build an altar unto the lord thy god, an altar of stones: but you shall not lift up any iron tool upon them.^{B8}

Why a prohibition just about iron? This surely has something to do with magnetism. Presumably, this cone-

shaped rock that was venerated by all of these priests and kings, and which was proudly stamped onto their coinage, was rather special. Perhaps it did indeed 'eat iron' or do something equally dramatic or mysterious. This is why the rock was special, for it not only came down to Earth from the gods as a great fiery streak in the sky, but it had other-worldly properties too; it possessed a strange force-field that could act invisibly at a distance.

That this magnetic stone was at some time located in the Temple of Jerusalem (or at least a component of the Galilean Sect's creed) is confirmed in the Talmud. In the same section where Simon Boethus was identified with the Shatiya-Elagabal stone, the Talmud says that one of Jesus' disciples had been excommunicated. This was the disciple Gehazi, who we

met in a previous chapter.

What had (Gehazi) done? — Some say he hung a lodestone above the Golden Calf, and thus suspended it between heaven and earth [by its magnetism]. Others maintain that he engraved the Divine Name in the calf's mouth, whereupon it [continually] proclaimed, 'I am the Lord thy God, and Thou shalt have no [other] gods before me.'^{T9}

This sounds remarkably similar to Hero of Alexandria's trick with the magnetic chariot, while the talking calf is almost identical to Hero's talking birds and groaning icons, which were used in temples to beguile the common people. So here is a magnetic lodestone, which sounds remarkably like the Elagabal, and yet it is being specifically linked by the Talmud to the disciples of King Jesus-Justus. This is direct evidence that the Elagabal was once an icon of the Galilean Sect and

therefore an icon of the biblical Jesus. This is why Jesus named his right-hand man Peter-Keyphas Πετρος-Κηφας, a name that means ‘rock-rock’, and why he was championed as the ‘rock’ upon which the Church was founded. Jesus was similarly identified with this same rock symbolism:

Jesus said unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures? The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. [B10](#)

This ‘stone’ symbolism was obviously important to the Galilean Sect, and so King Jesus-Arthur was once again identifying himself with the sacred stone of the gods – the Elagabal. Despite it being deliberately obscured, the Galilean Sect’s veneration of the Elagabal is still relatively plain to see. However, as we have already seen,

Jesus-Justus of Gamala became high priest of Jerusalem in AD 63-64, and so it is entirely possible that the Elagabal was installed in the Temple of Jerusalem at that time; much to the annoyance, I am sure, of the more traditional Temple priesthood. The Talmud appears to confirm this through a comment from the Roman army commander at the siege of Jerusalem, Titus, who was clearly expecting to find a sacred stone in the Temple of Jerusalem. When Titus entered the Temple after the siege had ended, he is reported as saying:

Where is their god, the rock in whom they trusted?[T11](#)

This comment is based upon Deut 32:37, and the Concordance of Poole and Wesley both say that this 'rock' referred to the Jews' 'false gods', a

stone icon or an Omphalos. This just has to be a reference to the same rock that King Jesus-Justus installed in the Temple of Jerusalem, the Omphalos-Elagabal-Benben, and Titus was expecting to find it in the Temple of Jerusalem. But it was not there. Peeved at not finding this sacred (magnetic?) rock, Titus is then said to have taken a harlot into the Holy of Holies for a little rest and relaxation, much to the disgust of the priesthood.

So what became of the Galilean Sect's sacred stone? The obvious answer is that such an important artifact would have been smuggled out of the city or concealed in the catacombs below the Temple, to prevent it getting into the hands of the despised Kittim (the Romans). Besides, the Romans were primarily looking for gold, and they found

enough of that to satisfy their greed without worrying unduly about a lump of magnetic rock. But if King Jesus-Justus was subsequently exiled to Chester, in England, then surely he would have made every effort to take this sacred stone with him. This would have been obvious to the Romans building the Dewa fortress, of course, but the magnetism of this stone would have been very localised and not obvious to an observer. The Roman commander may have had little or no interest in a rugged black stone, just as the Romans were not interested in the Jerusalem Temple's scrolls (which were given to Saul-Josephus-Johanan).

Thus, as we speculated earlier, it is entirely possible that the centerpiece of the Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa contained the sacred Elagabal Sun-stone and its ritual

Aphacan fountain. And who better to organise the complex plumbing that was discovered at Dewa, than Hero himself? Here was a genius of an engineer, who had already written several theses on hydraulics and pneumatics, who would have been keen to use all of his skills to get fresh spring-water to the Dewa Temple. It's certainly a thought.

But if the magnetic Elagabal stone was taken to Dewa in England, then this may be the origin of an alternative manifestation of the Holy Grail. We have already seen evidence that the Grail was a dish and a princess, but in Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* it was also said to be a stone:

It is well known to me that many a valiant
(knight) resides by the Grail at Munsalvasche
... I will tell you of their food: they live by a

stone whose nature is pure. If you know nothing of it, it shall be named to you here: it is called Lapsit Exillis. By that stone's power the Phoenix burns away, turning to ashes, yet those ashes bring it back to life ... that stone is also called the Grail.

The Grail allows all animals that live under the sky to multiply ... it gives sustenance to the brotherhood of knights ... On the outer edge of the stone an inscription composed of characters gives the name and lineage of whoever shall undertake the journey to salvation.¹²

This facet of the Grail was therefore a sacred stone that provided food for the assembled knights, while a magical inscription on its base detailed your name and ancestry. More importantly, this Grail-stone was called the Lapsit Exillis and within this name we can probably see its true physical nature. The word *lapsit* is a compound word derived from *lapsavit* meaning 'it fell' and *lapis* meaning 'stone'. Added to

this we have *exillis* which was derived from *ex celis* meaning 'from heaven'. Combining all of these elements we find that the Lapsit Exillis was 'The Stone that Fell from Heaven', which is why it was sometimes said to be the crown of Lucifer that fell from heaven. So the sacred stone that has been central to so many nations and creeds was most definitely a meteorite, and if it was an iron-nickel meteorite it may well have been magnetic. It is also from a variation of this translation, the *lapis elixir*, that the fabled Philosopher's Stone was derived; a stone from which the magical substance known as *al-iksir* could be obtained, which could transmute base-metals into gold.

In other words, the Holy Grail was not just a representation of a bloodline, it was also a device for

communicating with the gods and a horn of plenty that was controlled by the royal family. And all of this power was derived through something that sounds very much like the Omphalos-Elagabal. It is no wonder that the nature and mere presence of the Elagabal stone was kept secret:

There lives a worthy brotherhood (of the Grail-stone) ... they have turned away all people of all lands, so that the Grail is unknown except to those called to the Grail in Munsalvasche.¹³

Secret, that is, until Emperor Elagabalus got hold of it and paraded it around the streets of Rome in a chariot. Note also that the Lapsit Exillis Grail-stone was closely linked to the Phoenix, and in a similar fashion the Elagabal was always emblazoned with the image of an eagle. But in Palmyran symbolism, the eagle was an

image of the flying Sun-disk of Ra, as the images in the Temple of Bel amply demonstrate; and so the Phoenix of the Lapsit Exillis is exactly the same as the eagle on the Elagabal Sun-stone. They are one and the same stone, and so the Elagabal, if it could ever be found again, is a manifestation of the Holy Grail.

This same Elagabal stone may also be the origin of the Arthurian legend of the Sword in the Stone. In *Merlin*, by Robert de Boron, Arthur was only recognised as the rightful king of Britain through the act of pulling a sword from a stone, a feat that no other person had been able to accomplish. But what did this refer to? In what way can a sword become 'trapped' in a lump of rock? And why would pulling it out be a mark of royalty and kingship? The answer to

these questions can be seen in the observations of Claudian in the previous quote, who quaintly observed that a lodestone 'lives on iron and feeds on its inflexible nature'. In other words, anyone placing their sword near the Elagabal-Benben would find it instantly attracted and firmly affixed to the stone. If the magnetism was strong enough, it may even have been rather difficult to get the sword back off from the surface of the stone.

However, King Arthur-Jesus was different, because he withdrew his sword with ease, and he thus demonstrated his superior knowledge and therefore his right to rule. How was this trick achieved? The answer probably lies with the genius mechanic, Hero of Alexandria and his miraculous contraptions, for one suspects that Hero may have

commissioned and fabricated a nonferrous sword (Excalibur) that was not attracted to the stone.*⁴ This is most probably why Wolfram von Eschenbach describes the attendants of the Lapsit Exillis Grail-stone as holding silver knives, for any ferrous knives would have instantly stuck to the magnetic stone. This, therefore, explains away one of the central components of Grail mythology, for the Sword in the Stone episode referred to the magnetic Elagabal, and the Grail leadership's ability to use and control that strange magnetic force to amaze the assembled knights. However, this story may again place the Elagabal in Britain, rather than the Near East, and so the Elagabal may well have been the central icon of the Temple of the Zodiac.

Thus, we appear to have

uncovered all the elements that are incorporated into Holy Grail mythology. At its most basic level the Grail was a cup or bowl that was used by the royalty during a sacred ritual meal, which contained red wine as a symbol of the royal bloodline. The Grail was also the womb of a princess that again represented the bloodline of the royal family through many generations. Finally, the Grail was also a sacred (and somewhat magical) *betyl* or meteoritic stone that was magically inscribed with your family tree and brought fertility to the land – a stone that was called the Benben-Omphalos-Lingam-Elagabal.

The reason the royal family kept this special stone is that it gave them power over the people, just as Hero's magic jugs similarly enchanted and beguiled the people by turning water

into wine. The Elagabal was a sacred stone that had fallen from the heavens and so it must have been a gift from the gods, and the fact that it held mysterious powers and abilities confirmed its divine nature.



Fig 16.8 The Varanasi Lingam.

Those who had been initiated into the higher levels of Palmyran religious society could witness these strange powers, which included strong magnetism at the very least.

If other reports can be believed these strange powers included levitation too, but personally I think that this is an exaggeration. Mind you, if this magnetic stone came in two


sections, and their magnetic poles could be arranged to oppose each other, perhaps these stones could be made to levitate after all. Such a spectacle would have been quite sufficient to amaze a non-technological society – especially if the stones, being composed of iron-nickel, were extremely heavy – and thus quite sufficient for a royal family to demonstrate their power over nature.

Tower of Magdal

The Elagabal was certainly a party trick to amaze the assembled aristocracy, but did it have a more esoteric and spiritual role in Temple ritual? The first element to look at here is the phallic symbolism of the Omphalos stone at Delphi. The shape and spelling of the Omphalos would

clearly suggest phallic symbolism, but the stone's association with the goddess Omphale would also suggest a feminine trait. Thus the Omphalos was in some respects androgynous. That the Omphalos *was* a phallic symbol is confirmed by its Hindu cousin, the Lingam stone, which has the same shape, form and symbolism as the Omphalos. But *lingam* also means 'phallus', and so these stones are clearly phallic. Having said that, if you pull a Lingam stone out of its ornate setting, it will invariably be seen to be a complete oval in shape. In which case, even the Hindu Lingam cannot decide if it is male or female: phallus or egg.

Although the Hindu religion is very ancient, it is not entirely clear exactly when the Lingam became a venerated symbol of the god Shiva.

However, since *lingam* is probably a simple reversal of the Egyptian *magdal*  meaning 'tower', it is likely that the Egypto-Judaic phallic (tower) symbology came first. That this *magdal* terminology was very important in Egypto-Judaic theology is confirmed by the name being adopted by Mary Magdalene Μαριαμ Μαγδαληνη, whose surname was derived from this same Egypto-Hebrew word for 'tower'. So Mary's formal title was actually Mary Phallus, which was an important title and position within Egypto-Judaic theology, otherwise known as God's Wife (see the book *Solomon* for further details).

Hindu Lingams come in all sizes from centimeter-sized lucky charms weighing a few grams to meter-and-a-half high temple icons weighing well

over a tonne; and they are fabricated from many stone types from rough sandstone to polished marble and granite. Significantly, they are often anointed with oils poured from a *rhyton*, the Minoan conical anointing vessel that has a small hole at the bottom, a tradition that again suggests a Mediterranean origin for this Hindu ritual. Note also that the biblical Jacob poured oils onto his Lingam stone (Gen 28:18) and Elagabalus poured oils onto the Elagabal, in exactly the same fashion as Hindu priests do to this day.

There are twelve temples in India dedicated to the Omphalos-Lingam and this proliferation of sacred stones throughout India may well imply that there is not any one special stone of meteoric origin that is being venerated there. In other words, the Hindu stones are probably copies of an

older sacred stone cult that probably originated in the west. Since the oldest Hindu Lingam is said to be the Sri Parasurameshwara Lingam in Gudimallam, which dates from the third century BC, and since a Minoan *rhyton* is used to anoint it, it is highly likely that this entire tradition was brought to India by Alexander the Great.

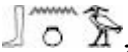


If so, then this tradition probably originated in Greece, with the Omphalos of Delphi. However, the details of the Omphalos veneration at Delphi would suggest an older source as, like the Islamic Ka'ba at Mecca, the Omphalos was said to be the Naval of the Universe. In addition, Zeus sent out two eagles to fly around the world and meet up on top of the Omphalos. But this is very similar to the symbolism of the Elagabal, which was also

emblazoned with the image of an eagle; and the Lapsit Exillis Grail, which was similarly linked to the Phoenix. However, as we have just seen, in Palmyra the eagle was a symbol of the flying Sun-disk of Ra, thus we have a direct connection here between the Sun-god Ra (the Phoenix) and the Elagabal, Omphalos and Lapsit Exillis Sun-stones.

In other words, the Omphalos-Elagabal was simply a later incarnation of the Egyptian Benben-Phoenix legend: the fabulous golden bird that flew back to the sacred stone at Heliopolis every few thousand years and reincarnated itself from its own ashes. This legend is actually a cosmic tale of the Sun exiting one astrological house and reincarnating itself in another, an event that occurs every two thousand years or so, as we have seen.

The golden bird imagery for the Phoenix comes from the Egyptian and Persian flying Sun-disk symbology (as shown in the chapter headings in this book), which does indeed look like a golden bird with its wings outstretched. This is why the Palmyrans adopted the eagle for this symbol instead, for it is an obvious substitute for a Sun-symbol that can also look innocently secular to the iconoclastic priests of the Jerusalem Temple.

The name for the Phoenix comes from the Greek *phoenix* φοινίξ meaning ‘date palm’, for two branches of the palm were often used to create a clandestine icon of the flying Sun-disk (see the book *Eden* for details and picture). This is probably why Palmyra was given this name, for the city was not named after the palms of the oasis,

but after the flying Sun-disk in the guise of a Phoenix or an eagle. It was also a perfect symbol for a city that had risen from the ashes of a previous empire, which made the symbology doubly apposite. Not surprisingly, the Egyptian name for the Phoenix was the Benu , a name which was strongly linked to the Benrit  date palm and to the Benben stone , itself.

The bottom line here is that the sacred Omphalos-Lingam-Elagabal imagery, which can be found in many diverse locations in the East, comes directly from the Benben stone at Heliopolis in Egypt. Perhaps the reason for the Hindu Lingam being a concealed egg (and the Elagabal also being depicted as an egg on occasions) might now be a little more understandable. The Benben stone was


a phallic symbol, the Primaeval Mound that created the world, which can be equated with the phallus of Atum that also created the world, and perhaps likened also to the Sun-temples of Lower Egypt and the great pyramids of Giza, which were also male and phallic. (The 'blade' Δ was always considered to be male, while the 'chalice' ∇ was a symbol of the feminine.)

However, the fabulous Benu-Phoenix returned to the Benben stone in Heliopolis and regenerated itself, and although the Benben mound was phallic this was also an act that required an egg, in an imitation of the great primaeval egg that created the world. Thus the phallic Benben stone also had to be inextricably linked to the egg of creation, and thus to the feminine. And so the Benben-

Omphalos-Elagabal was always going to have androgynous characteristics, just as did the Nazarene Primaeval Adam and the Egyptian creator-god, Atum (or Adum)

Navel

These sacred Omphalos-Elagabal stones had yet another form of cosmic symbolism, and that is the universal navel, the central point around which the entire universe was said to revolve. This symbolism can be seen in the original meaning of the word *gabal*. Although this word is Hebrew for ‘mountain’, as mentioned previously, it may have been derived from the Egyptian language – but from a tangential source. I think that the original word being used here was actually Qaba Ra (Kaba-la)

 which refers both to the intestines and to the 'circuit of the Sun', and therefore to the universal navel.

The ceremony associated with this concept was a great circling of the faithful around a sacred monument, and I believe that these ritual circular processions were originally conducted around the pyramids of Giza and Dahshur, which is why the Qaba or Gabal became strongly linked to mountains and Sun-gods. This ritual circling can still be seen in the Islamic world, where the faithful still circle the Ka'ba (Qaba) at Mecca. This is the same ritual as was once performed in Egypt, and the same word is still being used to describe it.

As was mentioned previously, the Hajar al Aswad, the black stone (or stones) that lies in the Ka'ba in Mecca,

has a similar provenance to the Elagabal, and it may even be a small piece of this very same stone. Another small fragment of the Hajar al Aswad was built into the keystone of the Tomb of Suleyman the Magnificent in Istanbul, and it confirms that this Islamic stone




*Fig
16.9 Fragment
of the Hajar al
Aswad at the
Tomb of
Suleyman the
Magnificent,
Istanbul.*

originally had the same shape as the Elagabal, as can be seen in figure 16.9. Note also the symbol of the Sun over this fragment, which confirms the Hajar al Aswad's association with the Sun, just as with the Elagabal Sun-

stone.

The Hajar al Aswad stone was not simply associated with the Sun, it was also associated with the Cosmos and the precessional circling of the constellations every two millennia or so. This is what the circling of the faithful around the Ka'ba represents, for when viewed from above this ritual depicts the apparent circling of the Cosmos around the Earth. In other words, Muslims are simply continuing the ancient veneration of the Omphalos-Elagabal stone, which is deliciously ironic for a religion that is so antagonistic towards other religions and 'Pagan' religions in particular.

It was through this same cosmological and intestinal symbology that the Hajar al Aswad became intimately connected with the constellation of Pisces. The Egyptian

qaba  also refers to the viscera, the circling coils of innards in an animal, as the hieroglyphs clearly illustrate. Thus the innards of the fish being referred to in the Vesica Piscis were not necessarily just the swim-bladder, but the intestines too – the Vesica Piscis was also a Viscera Pisces. The resulting association between the Islamic black stone and the Vesica Piscis is so strong that even the iconoclastic Muslims feel compelled to surround their sacred stone in a silver Vesica Piscis shroud. Thus every Muslim who kisses the Hajar al Aswad during the Hajj festival is symbolically kissing a woman's genitals and venerating the icon of a (magnetic) meteorite. How delightfully Pagan.


The Egyptian *qaba*  is also the basis of the Judaic Kabbalah, the



Fig 16.10 The Hajar al Aswad in a silver Vesica Piscis shroud.

more secretive and Gnostic wing of Judaism. The name for the Kabbalah was taken from *khabal* (*cabal*) חבל which means ‘oath’, ‘rope’ or ‘boundary’. The word can also be spelt as *gabal* גבל, confirming that it has a link to *gabal* meaning

‘mountain’ and to the Elagabal itself. It was explained previously that the rope was used in an initiation where a candidate was lowered down into a chamber, just as in Royal Arch Masonry. However, I have already speculated that the original ritual took place inside the pyramids at Giza,

where you do indeed require a rope to get to the chambers below. As a token of this ritual, modern Kabalists still wear a small red chord about their person.

This mention of a sacred coiled rope is also strongly reminiscent of the Egyptian cartouche, the encircling rope that surrounded the sacred names of the pharaoh (the cartouche symbol was originally a rope tied at one end and with the loose ends forming the base). This usage would suggest a strong relationship between the Gabal (Kabal) and royalty, which is exactly what we see.

The reason for all this covert and mysterious circling is that the movements of the heavens, and thus



*Fig 16.11 A
cartouche of
Cleopatra,
demonstrating*

the design and
intent of the gods
themselves, were
state secrets in

*the outline of
the encircling
rope.*

these early eras, knowledge that was
only deemed fit for the likes of the high
priest and the king (or emperor).
Knowledge of the circuit that Pisces
made, be that yearly or millennially,
could foretell the future and therefore
divine the outcome of wars or dynastic
disputes. This was powerful
knowledge and only the select few,
like King Jesus-Justus of Gamala and
the Galilean Sect, knew that Pisces had
just become the dominant constellation
for the next 2,300 years or so
(Aquarius becomes dominant in about
AD 2350). This was the sacred
knowledge that the Temple of the
Zodiac at Dewa was intended to
incorporate within its complex design.

It is also part of the reason for this same temple falling foul of opposition groups and being destroyed and then recreated some 120 years later.

In fact, this precessional change in the ruling sign of the zodiac has caused quite a few problems over the years. The Old Testament Joseph fought long and hard for his family of 'shepherds' (Aries), while both Pharaoh Akhenaton and Moses were experiencing a great deal of trouble in trying to end the worship of 'bulls' (Taurus). Alexander the Great wore the two horns of a sheep (Aries) during his campaigns, to demonstrate his knowledge of precession. Three centuries later, King Jesus-Justus got himself into acute difficulties whilst trying to change the veneration from 'sheep' (Aries) to 'fish' (Pisces), and it would appear that Emperor Elagabalus

was in similar trouble. This is, of course, the order in which the precessional constellations move – Taurus, Aries, Pisces, Aquarius.

Elagabalus

It was probably this same change in the constellations that caused the eventual downfall of Elagabalus, the mad emperor who was a precocious 14-year-old at the time of his inauguration. Elagabalus tried to do much the same as Pharaoh Akhenaton; he tried to destroy the old gods of the Empire and institute the Elagabal (Heliogabal) as the primary if not the sole god of Rome. Strangely enough, the consort he chose for the Elagabal was Ourania, who is often said to be a Moon goddess, but in reality she was an incarnation of Isis as the Queen of

Heaven. However, this is another familiar name in this research, and no doubt this choice was influenced by Elagabalus' ancestral links to Queen Thea Muse Ourania.

But if Elagabalus was related in some manner to the royal line of Thea Muse and Julia-Helena of Adiabene, who had once lived only 'next door' in Palmyra, then one might expect the young emperor to have displayed some elements of Egypto-Judaic culture and religion. This is exactly what we find, for the Romans were rather disgusted by some of the Emesan traditions:

(Elagabalus') offence consisted ... in his circumcising his foreskin and abstaining from swine's flesh ... the circumcision which he actually accomplished was a part of the priestly requirements of Elagabal ... and he accordingly mutilated many of his companions in like manner.¹⁸

Like the Galileans of King Jesus-Justus, and quite unlike the Simple Judaism of Saul-Josephus, Elagabalus demanded circumcision from his followers and he also forbade the eating of pork. Circumcision was a decidedly un-Roman procedure that emperors had sought to eliminate from the Empire for centuries, and it clearly demonstrates Elagabalus' close association with Egypto-Judaism and with the Galilean Sect of Jesus-Justus. (Egyptian priests were also circumcised.)

However, the links we have already explored between Emperor Elagabalus and Pharaoh Akhenaton go much deeper than this, for the young emperor apparently tried to turn himself into a woman:

The emperor drove himself to such a frenzy of lewdness that he asked the physicians to

contrive a woman's vagina in his person by means of an incision.¹⁹

This assertion that Elagabalus tried to create a vagina in himself is probably malicious gossip, designed to demonise his rule. However, I have already commented in the book *Cleopatra* that King Jesus-Justus may have been requesting his disciples to be castrated – to become eunuchs – and yet this is but one small step away from the accusations levelled at Elagabalus. While the assertion that Jesus was looking for eunuch disciples may sound like wild, derogatory speculation, that is exactly what King Jesus is requesting in Matthew 19:12. It is also a fact that King Jesus-Justus was a Nazarene and yet according to Hippolytus that is exactly what this sect preached – castration:

These (Naasseni or Nazarene), according to the system advanced by them, magnify ... a man and a son of man. And this man is a hermaphrodite, and is called among them Adam ... (he) has been emasculated, that is, he has passed over from the earthly parts of the nether world to the everlasting substance above, where, he says, there is neither female or male, but a new creature, a new man, which is hermaphrodite.²⁰

During the second century this cult of castration continued to flourish, and Lucian and others delight in giving us salacious reports about their festivals:

While the rest are playing flutes and performing the rites, frenzy comes upon many ... he throws off his clothes, rushes to the center with a great shout and takes up a sword and immediately castrates himself. Then he rushes through the city holding in his hands the parts he has cut off. He takes female clothing and women's adornment from whatever house he throws these (testicles) into.²¹

However, these tossers of testicles

were no longer called the Nazarene in these reports, they were actually called the Galli or Gallae, which just has to be a derivation of the name for the Galilean Sect. Thus the Eastern cult of castration utilised both of the names of the sects that King Jesus was most closely associated with – the Nazarene and the Galilean – and the quotation in the Gospel of Matthew clearly demonstrates that Jesus was familiar with and encouraging the practice of castration. The inescapable conclusion, therefore, is that the cult of castration was inspired (or perpetuated) by King Jesus and his disciples.

In addition, these castration cults were closely associated with the cult of the great mother goddess – Isis, Ashtoreth, Astarte, Ishtar, Aphrodite and even, in her celestial guise,

Ourania – and their men were said to be strongly effeminate. This may well be why the women of this Church played such a central role in the ritual, as Mary the Virgin and Mary Magdalene appear to have done. In this case, the seemingly bizarre antics of Emperor Elagabalus were derived directly from the Church of Jesus and James, and so Jesus himself may have behaved in a similar fashion. Hence, of course, the many references to Jesus being a wine-bibber and glutton, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners. This cult of castration continued right through until the early fourth century, when the first Council of Nicaea denounced it and expelled any castrated priests, a ruling which proves that castration was still a component of the Christian creed at this time.

Yet this search for a utopia of castration and hermaphrodites was not simply a peculiar first century Nazarene-Galilean creed, for it is entirely possible that this may be a custom or belief-system that takes us right back into the era and traditions of Pharaoh Akhenaton once more. Akhenaton was the maverick pharaoh who tried to institute a Solar-based monotheism into Egypt, just as Elagabalus was attempting to do in Rome. However, Akhenaton was another monarch who portrayed himself as being androgynous: a man with a slight bust, slim waist, wide hips and no genitals. Thus Akhenaton was probably a direct forerunner of the Nazarene-Galileans. And in his turn, Pharaoh Akhenaton may have inherited these traditions from the earlier veneration of Atum, the great creator

god. But this will be discussed further in the next book in this Trilogy.

In nearly every respect, therefore, Jesus and Elagabalus were the heirs to the theology of Atum and Pharaoh Akhenaton, and were perhaps even bloodline descendants of the latter too. And since it has already been demonstrated that Akhenaton was the brother of the biblical Moses, Elagabalus' links with Egypto-Judaism and with the Nazarene-Galilean Sect are pretty much complete. Incidentally, Cassius Dio lambasts Elagabalus for his Persian dress and regularly calls him 'Sardanapalus': a mythical ruler of Persia who was known for his effeminate and degenerate ways. As Lord Byron says, in his play of the same name:

Sardanapalus, the character which Ctesias depicted or invented, an effeminate

debauchee, sunk in luxury and sloth ... and painted his face and carded purple wool in the *penetralia* of his *seraglio* (the innermost rooms of his harem).²²

Cassius Dio obviously thought that Elagabalus was a new incarnation of the legendary Sardanapalus. In other words, the primary cultural influences on Elagabalus were Persian, just as those of Queen Thea Muse and Queen Julia-Helena were. In fact, the Persian dress that Cassius Dio so despised was the very same two-piece tunic and trousers that were customarily worn in Palmyra, as the picture of the tomb of Yahai in the colour section demonstrates. And, as luck would have it, the name Sardanapalus is derived from *sardion palaios* σαρδιος παλαιος meaning ‘ancient red stone’ – a suitable name indeed!

However, while this degenerate

Eastern luxury was bad enough, the veneration of a stone in preference to Jupiter was a step too far for the Roman establishment. Like the religious reforms of Pharaoh Akhenaton, the reforms of Elagabalus were just too much for the population to bear, and so both of these radical, maverick leaders were deposed after a short period in office. While the evidence appears to show that Akhenaton was forced into exile, the fate of Elagabalus was less pleasant. It is said that he was either drowned in a latrine or cut down by his bodyguards.

Numism

Incidentally, the coins of Ouranius Antoninus are not the only image we have of the Elagabal, the stone that was identified as being the Holy Grail in

Parzival. Elagabalus himself minted an identical coin to that of Ouranius Antoninus, with the Sun-stone displayed in a temple, the only problem being the poor quality of the examples that have been discovered thus far. But he did mint several examples of the Elagabal emblazoned with the image of an eagle (the Phoenix), carried in a chariot drawn by four horses and shaded by four palm trees (see fig 16.12). One cannot help seeing in this imagery the same symbolic layout that is portrayed by the Aya Sophia cathedral in Istanbul and the Taj Mahal in India, where the four minarets surround the central dome of the cathedral. The links between this 'four-poster' imagery and the Egyptian concept of heaven is discussed in the book *Tempest*. In these coins Elagabalus calls his sacred stone

‘Sanct deo Sol’ or ‘Holy God Sol’, which is a clear reference to the Sun-god Sol.



Fig 16.12 The Elagabal of Elagabalus, the sacred Mountain of the Sun, which was known in later eras as the Holy Grail. This image probably represents the Elagabal in a procession in Rome, as accurately described by Herodian of Antioch. Note the image of an eagle (the Phoenix) on the stone.

In addition, fig 16.13 shows two images of coins minted by Emperor Macrinus and his son Diadumenian; Macrinus being the emperor who immediately preceded Emperor Elagabalus. Although Macrinus hailed from the same Mauretanian region as the Mauretanian-Syrian Severan dynasty, he is not thought to have been of the same family line.



Fig 16.13 The Elagabal of Macrinus (left) and Diadumenian (right), when it was based in Byblos.

The Elagabal temple in the Macrinus image is claimed to be in Byblos,

which demonstrates how the stone must have been moved from city to city. Both father and son were ruthlessly killed when Elagabalus made his successful claim to the throne at the tender age of fourteen, to re-establish the Severan dynasty. Subsequent to this coup, the sacred stone then made its way to the nearby city of Emesa and eventually to Rome.

Note, however, that in these images the Elagabal stone resides in the center of an open temple courtyard, surrounded by pillars and alcoves, just as we find at the Temple of the Zodiac in Dewa. The temple precinct in these images may be rectangular, instead of arcuate, but the layout is remarkably similar. Note also that the stone rests on a horned altar – in other words, it rests on a typically Judaic altar and so the stone itself must have been an

Egypto-Judaic icon, just as previously suggested. These horned altars and sarcophagi can also be seen in the deserted cities south of Aleppo and in Palmyra, as we saw in Chapter XI. See the book *Tempest* for a full explanation of these Judaic horned altars.

Temple Resurrection

Having seen the Egypto-Judaeo-Syrian heritage of the Severan dynasty and their distinctive brand of theology, it should not be such a surprise that the Egypto-Judaic Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa was inexplicably rebuilt at this very same time. With the Severan dynasty in general and the reign of Elagabalus in particular, we have undeniable links to the same geographical region and the same Egypto-Judaic Galilean-Nazarene

religion that venerated the Egypto-Greco-Judaic Benben-Omphalos-Elagabal stone. And we have the same cult of the messiah-like hermaphrodite too. Thus the first Temple of the Zodiac in Chester was intimately connected to the very same creed that Emperor Elagabalus was promoting in the East during the third century AD.

It is not certain if Elagabalus himself commissioned the new Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa, but his AD 218 - 222 reign straddles the date for this new construction. Evidence for this comes in many forms, but perhaps the best is a *denari* coin of Elagabalus that was found under a paving stone in the courtyard of the new Temple.²³ So here we have this enigmatic Temple at the edge of the Empire rising Phoenix-like from its own ashes some 120 years after the first one was destroyed,

which is all rather peculiar. But there is something even more peculiar about this new building, for although the edifice that was eventually reconstructed in the Dewa fortress was another Vesica Piscis temple, it was not made to exactly the same design.

As was mentioned previously, the site had been leveled and deliberately used as a rubbish dump, even though space in any Roman fortress was very precious, and this dumping-ground had accumulated a meter-thick layer of compacted material. Rather than removing this material and using the old concrete foundations, which were actually more substantial than the new foundations, the architect of the new temple simply dug new foundations on top of the old. This has caused a great deal of head-scratching, for it makes no sense. The

architect most definitely knew of the old temple and the old foundations, as the new foundations of the outer wall were placed precisely upon the remains of the old temple's walling. Thus the new building retains exactly the same position and exterior dimensions as the old; so why go to the expense of making new foundations, when the old foundations were in exactly the same position and of better quality? In my view, the only possible reason for doing this is that the old foundations were considered to be sacred and inviolable, like the grave of a lost king. Thus the new temple began life on top of the old, which remained largely undisturbed below a new layer of concrete.

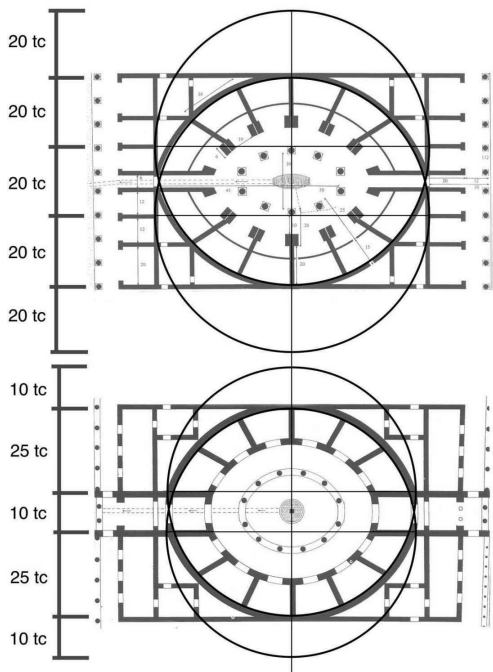
The second conundrum is that the inner design of the new temple, which is the most sacred portion of the

whole design, was not the same! The new architect designed a Vesica Piscis temple all right, but it was not laid out in the same fashion, for the dimensions of the layout-circles were slightly different. This is despite the fact that the architect must have known the precise layout of the old temple, for again the new foundations for the interior arcs rested in part on the old walls. So why the new layout? Was this an era in which the true design of the Vesica Piscis had been lost, and the architect could not understand the sacred geometry of the old temple? Was this an era when the Egyptian Thoth cubit had been lost, and the architect was planning a site in Roman measurements?

Actually, neither of these postulations is true. The architect of the new Temple of the Zodiac did fully

understand sacred geometry, and he did use Egyptian Thoth cubits (tc), he just melded these together in a different fashion. Instead of using layout circles measuring 80 tc in diameter, the new layout-circles measure 36.75 m, or exactly 70 tc. Having already argued that the 80 tc dimension of the first temple was related to the Great Pyramid, the reduction to a 70 tc dimension would appear to represent a break with this Egyptian heritage. Actually, that is not necessarily so, for while the ratio of the dimensions of the Great Pyramid to Pi was based upon the number 40, its height was based upon the number 7. The denominator of the $22 : 7$ fractional equivalent of Pi is the number 7, and when this is multiplied by the 40 ratio it becomes 280 tc, which is the height of the Great Pyramid.

Having chosen smaller layout circles for the new Temple of the Zodiac, the architect then moved their centers closer together. The old temple had the centers 20 tc apart while the new ones were just 10 tc apart, and the net result of this change was a temple with a more circular form. Nevertheless, despite the changes that have been made, we once again see conclusive usage of Egyptian measurements and so once again we see conclusive evidence that Egypto-Judaic theology formed the foundations, literally, of the Temple of the Zodiac's creed.



*Fig 16.14 Layout of the old Temple of the Zodiac (top) Layout of the new Temple of the Zodiac (below).
(Chester Archaeology)*

Just as significant is the likelihood that the architect of the new Temple of the Zodiac arrived at Dewa at the very

time that the Egypto-Judaic Emesan royalty took the reigns of power in Rome. These were the very Egypto-Judaic priest-kings who were directly related to the Galilean-Nazarene Sect, and so it would appear that they had achieved what King Jesus-Justus himself had failed to accomplish – the throne of Rome. Unsurprisingly, it was this same family that began to rebuild the Temple of the Zodiac that their ancestor had begun some 140 years before, and they were doing so while using Egyptian units of measure.

Turbulent priests

One important question that still remains is why the architect chose to alter the design. He must have known the original layout of the old Temple of the Zodiac's Vesica Piscis arcs and

rooms, as his workmen repeatedly hit the tops of the walls and foundations of the old temple, and built new foundations on top of them. Indeed, the new architect not only changed the design, but substituted another very similar design based upon the same Vesica Piscis principles and exactly the same overall dimensions.

The answer to this, I believe, may be visible in the resulting layout. The primary outcome of this new design was that the rooms were of a more standardised shape and size and the entrance passageways were nearly three times as wide. Initially, I wondered if a larger central icon, like the Omphalos-Elagabal, needed to be brought in and out of this entrance. However, the Delphi and Galway Omphalos stones are only about a meter high and 70 cm wide. Likewise,

the Elagabal of Elagabalus was pulled through the streets of Rome in a chariot, rather than in a heavy farmer's wagon, which suggests that it was not that heavy. The contemporary historian, Herodian of Syria, who wrote a chronicle of this era, said that the Elagabal was 'huge', as we have already seen. He then said of the Elagabal:

A six-horse chariot bore the sun god (the Elagabal stone), the horses huge and flawlessly white, with expensive gold fittings and rich ornaments. Elagabalus ran backward in front of the chariot, facing the god and holding the horses' reins. He made the whole journey in this reverse fashion, looking up into the face of his god. Since he was unable to see where he was going, his route was paved with gold dust to keep him from stumbling and falling, and bodyguards supported him on each side to protect him from injury.²⁴

Coin images of the Elagabal do not

agree on its size. Some portray the stone in the chariot as being half the height of the horses that draw it, while others show it being larger than the horses. If these representations are in any way accurate, we can estimate that the Elagabal must have measured some 2 m high and at least 1.2 m wide. However, any meteorite of that size would have weighed ten or more tonnes, especially if it was metallic, and been too heavy for a mere chariot. So these coin images of the Elagabal are probably exaggerated, in order that the stone can be easily seen in the image, and its true size was something like a meter high and wide. It is highly unlikely, therefore, that the Elagabal was wider than the original passageway to the Temple of the Zodiac, and so there would be no need to widen it.

An alternative suggestion may be the theo-political climate in which the temple was constructed. The old temple's entrance was 3.5 tc (1.82 m) wide, which made the entrance-ways narrow and foreboding. They were long and narrow, and perhaps guarded at the exterior by the Roman infantry. Perhaps they were designed in this fashion to keep the contents of the temple secret; but the end result was an intimidating entrance, for surely something dangerous lay in this sinister lair? Conversely, the new temple's entrances measured exactly 10 tc (5.24 m) wide and were much more welcoming, with a pair of statues flanking the entrance-way – perhaps one could even see a glimpse of the central monument from the outside. Is this observation significant? If the era in which the new temple was built was

more open to the veneration of the sacred stone of the Elagabal, as it was during the reign of Emperor Elagabalus, this may well have been a significant factor.

But the Elagabal was not in Dewa during Elagabalus' reign, for we have good evidence for it being in Emesa and then in Rome, where Emperor Elagabalus made the Sun-stone a central component of Roman worship. But what happened to it after Elagabalus' short and troubled reign ended? The veneration of a stone had never been that popular in Rome, so it was probably moved out of the city by the Elagabal priesthood, and it is often said that it went back to its original site in Emesa (modern Homs). Evidence for this is provided by the coin that we have already seen, which was minted by Ouranius Antoninus who is said to

have ruled a generation after Elagabalus.

Antoninus must have been an insignificant and unsuccessful usurper of the Imperial throne, for he claims to be *Avtok* or Emperor on his coins, but he is not known within the annals of Rome. However, the precise dates of Ouranius Antoninus' abortive reign are unknown, and the established date of AD 254 is said to be derived from coins bearing his name. Apparently, some of these coins are dated to 565 of the Seleucid era (or AD 254) but I was unable to find any evidence of this on the coins in question.

Alternatively, comments by Zosimus and Queen Zenobia allude to Ouranius Antoninus being a priest-king of Emesa during the reigns of Elagabalus and Alexander Severus, a usurper who decided to make a bid for

the Imperial throne of Rome after their demise, and this is the option that I have placed within the family tree in fig 11.1. If this earlier date for the abortive reign of Ouranius Antoninus is the correct date, then the Elagabal did not necessarily travel back to Syria in the decades after the reign of Elagabalus. Instead, it simply goes missing from history at pretty much the same time as the second Temple of the Zodiac was constructed at Dewa. Could there be a link here, between the end of the Severan dynasty of Emesan emperors and the rise of the second Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa?

Could some of the surviving priest kings of Emesa have taken the Elagabal to somewhere that was rather safer than turbulent Syria? (Especially as Shapur I of Persia attacked Syria in the AD 250s.) Alternatively, did

Maximinus Thrax, the next emperor of Rome, order the troublesome stone and its turbulent priest-kings into exile, much as King Jesus-Justus had been exiled over a century before? A stone cannot, after all, foment a rebellion on its own: it needs supporters, wealth and willing combatants. Separate the stone and its priesthood from its supporters, and it is as emasculated as the exiled King Jesus once was. It becomes an ordinary rugged, black stone; pampered but useless.

Celtic stones

While a possible link between the Elagabal and the second Temple of the Zodiac may seem like a baseless supposition, there are some points in favour of this suggestion. Firstly, we know that the new Temple of the

Zodiac was rebuilt at the end of the Severan dynasty, just as the Elagabal goes missing from the historical record. We also know that the Elagabal was intimately connected with the Vesica Piscis, just as was the design of the first Temple of the Zodiac in the Dewa fortress. Yet we find a new temple dedicated to Pisces being constructed during the very same era in which the Elagabal went missing from Rome.

Not only are there demonstrable links with Piscean symbology across the Empire here, but Greater Britain also ended up with its own versions of these sacred phallic stones – its own Elagabals. It would appear that these are only copies of the original Elagabal, but the fact that this same tradition ended up in the west and north of Greater Britain is indicative of

the original Elagabal being in Britain at some point in time. There are three Omphalos stones in Ireland alone: the Tara stone at the sacred burial site just north of Dublin, the Castlestrange stone in County Roscommon, and the Turoe stone in Loughrea, County Galway. Generically, these stones are known as Lia Fails or Stones of Destiny, the equivalent of the Scottish Stone of Scone, but it is obvious that none of these stones is the original meteoric Benben-Elagabal.

Of the three just mentioned the Turoe stone is the most interesting, for it is a *lingam*-shaped (phallus-shaped) stone that precisely mimics the Omphalos at Delphi, except that it is decorated with Celtic motifs. But this Irish Lia Fail is at the opposite end of the Roman Empire to the Omphalos of Delphi or, indeed, to the Elagabal of

Emesa; so how did this design arrive in Celtic Ireland? One possibility has to be via a link to Dewa, and a cult of this same stone in that location.

The other claim to the Lia Fail, a Celtic Omphalos-Elagabal, is the more famous Scottish Stone of Scone (pronounced Scoon), which is said to be the sacred stone that was taken to Scotland by King Gaythelos and Queen Scota, who were Egyptian monarchs circa 1300 BC. The history and identities of these Egypto-Scottish monarchs are explained in the book *Scota*; but in short it would appear that they were actually Pharaoh Aye and Queen Ankhesenamun of the Egyptian Amarna dynasty, and their descendants may well have ended up in exile in Ireland and Scotland. This stone is again said to have been the stone that the biblical Jacob used in Genesis

28:18, which again links this stone with the East and with the Egypto-Judaic veneration of phallic Omphalos stones.

The sacred Stone of Scone was used as a coronation stone by the Scottish monarchs until it was forcibly taken to England by Edward I, and used thereafter as the English coronation stone: the stone upon which all English monarchs sat during the coronation at Westminster Abbey. Although this

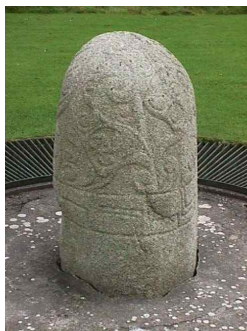


Fig 16.15 The Turoe Lia Fail, Loughrea.

Compare this stone to the Omphalos of Delphi in the previous chapter.

fabulous history and prestige usage confirms the sacredness that is ascribed to this stone, this particular rugged lump of sandstone that has sat in Westminster Abbey for several centuries was not the real Stone of Scone. On the contrary, purists of Celtic mythology will tell a much more fantastic story about a circular stone shaped like a Scottish curling-stone, which has the power to levitate itself. Is this Scottish fable a story about the Elagabal – the metallic, cone-shaped lodestone that had the power to ‘eat’ (attract) iron and possibly even levitate?

Unfortunately, most of these quests for sacred stones end up in various levels of disappointment. The Irish Lia Fails are all pieces of ordinary stone, while the Scottish Stone of Scone is notable primarily for

its mysterious absence, with all enquiries leading to shrugged shoulders or knowing winks that belie little in the way of evidence. Meanwhile, the Islamic Hajar al Aswad is a miserable collection of broken rocks recessed in a symbolic vagina and coated in a generous layer of the faithful's saliva.

But the Elagabal was not like this: it was real, visible to all, possibly meteoric, possibly magnetic, and venerated by high priests, emperors, kings and queens alike. It sat in a temple, it was taken for rides around Rome in a chariot; it was a real, physical artifact that people could touch. So where did this rather special stone go to, after its short stay in Rome?

Unfortunately, there is no clear answer to this question at present.

Cassius Dio simply says that ‘it was banished from Rome’ after the death of Elagabalus, but that tells us little about its destination.²⁵ The most obvious location was back to Emesa. But the powerful royal ladies of Emesa – Julia Maesa and Julia Mamaea, the Emperor’s grandmother and mother respectively – were still ruling Rome at this time, through their guardianship of the young Emperor Alexander Severus, the last emperor of the Severan dynasty. The time was not necessarily right to have the despised Elagabal-stone back in Emesa. It had caused enough problems during the reign of Elagabalus, and the last thing the Severans needed was for the impressionable Alexander to take his priestly duties to the Elagabal more seriously, as did his predecessor.

Perhaps, instead, the sacred

stone went to the increasingly influential city and empire of Palmyra. From either of these locations it could easily have been taken by the barbaric Islamic hoards, after their invasion of the region in the mid seventh century AD, which may be why we find fragments of the stone being venerated in Mecca. Alternatively, the stone could have been banished, along with its troublesome eastern priest-kings, by Emperor Maximinus Thrax; and so it was returned as the centerpiece of the renovated Temple of the Zodiac at Dewa, safely tucked away on the edges of the Empire from the AD 230s through to the fall of Roman Britain in the early fifth century AD. Thereafter, the exiled Elagabal priesthood would have had to have taken the stone elsewhere for safekeeping, for the society, economy and security of Roman Britain was

rapidly unravelling. Perhaps it subsequently ended up in Scotland, taken as booty by invading tribes; perhaps it went back to Emesa, to sit in its original temple; perhaps it was broken up and scattered to the four winds, with some broken fragments ending up in Mecca. We simply do not know.

Legacy

The fate of the Elagabal remains a mystery. However, we do know that the legacy of this sacred stone and the priest-kings of Emesa who served it, survived the centuries and probably survives even to this day. The Emesan priesthood just took their belief system, moved to another country and started all over again. That they had done this before is almost indisputable,

for the origins of the Elagabal most certainly go back to Egypt and the imagery of the Phoenix standing upon the Primaeval Mound, the Benben Stone. Undoubtedly, this is the foundation (stone) upon which the creed of the Elagabal and its associated Phoenix-eagle were founded. Likewise, some of Elagabalus' curious antics and physiology were undoubtedly inspired by Pharaoh Akhenaton and the creed of the Nazarene. But Akhenaton and his brother Moses were exiled from their homeland and so these traditions moved further north and east, until they eventually settled in Judaeo-Syria. But there were yet more exiles to endure, due to the military campaigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Vespasian, and again the people were scattered. But wherever this creed settled, it

flourished anew; it may have operated under a different social climate and a different language, but it was recognisably the same.

The net result of these many exiles was Palmyra and Emesa and the vibrant societies in those regions. But the Galilean-Nazarene creed was destined not to endure in these lands either, for the Islamic invasions of the seventh century were to devastate the region, as this aggressive new belief system spread its destructive tentacles ever westwards. Palmyra and Emesa were subsumed and sucked dry, with the citizens either converted to Islam, subjected to the religious tax or simply killed, just as the Koran prescribes.

In fact, in the region around Aleppo alone, over seven hundred towns and settlements were denuded of their people in one of the greatest

population movements (or genocides) of ancient times; a pogrom which produced the Dead Cities of Aleppo. Being solidly built of fine dressed stone, many of these deserted cities are still standing, and represent the finest examples of Romo-Byzantine rural architecture to be found anywhere in the Empire.²⁶ The architecture is also very similar to that found in the equally deserted city of Gamala (Umm el-Jimal) in Jordan, the city of Jesus of Gamala; especially in the identical design of rooms containing seemingly unnecessary arches.

But perhaps the term 'rural architecture' conveys the wrong imagery here, for although these towns were functional rather than ornate, they still contain vast cathedrals, bathhouses, monasteries, hospices, tombs and mansions, and one can still

imagine the original population milling around these great edifices and walking down the high streets. But suddenly the illusion fades, the people are gone, and the empty streets are once more filled with dust and tumbleweed. An entire civilisation had been destroyed, and a pall of poverty and darkness had fallen over these lands from which they have never recovered.



Fig 16.16 A small Byzantine church in the Dead City of Al-Bara, southwest of Aleppo.

However, although Islam is still dominant in Syria the current president, Bashar al-Assad, is not actually a Muslim in the strict sense of the word. Assad belongs to the minority Shiite sect of Islam known as the Alawi, but the original name for this sect was the Nasiriya. This term has great resonance with the Arabic term Nasrani, meaning 'Christian', which might seem odd for a sect of Islam, but the answer to this muddle may well be that both of these sects were ultimately derived from the Nazarene Galileans, who became so dominant in this region. However, since the Alawi faith is highly initiatory and since their core religious texts have always been secret, the fundamental beliefs of the Alawi are not known. Such is the secrecy that even lay Alawis do not know the secrets of the creed they

follow. (But that is true of Christianity too, for most Christians do not even know that Jesus had brothers and sisters!)

Nevertheless, we may be able to derive some clues to Alawi beliefs through their culture and the general rumour-mill. They are said to reject centralised worship, and even though they have been ordered to build mosques (as good Muslims), those that have been constructed largely stand empty. While this refusal to indulge in group worship may seem odd, it accords precisely with the teachings of King Jesus-Arthur, who effectively said ‘do not go to church’:

(Jesus said) and when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets ... when you pray, enter into your closet, and when you have shut the door, pray to your Father in secret.[B27](#)

It is also rumoured that the Alawi-Nasiriya follow astrology, take wine in communion and celebrate the Christian festivals of Christmas and Epiphany and the Zoroastrian new year, as well as all the usual Islamic festivals. It is hard to know how much credence should be given to these rumours, but these, combined with their refusal to go to 'church', just as King Jesus commanded, might suggest that the Alawis follow a Galilean-Nazarene-based religion that has taken on the cloak of Islam to prevent the excesses of Muslim persecution. This cloak of orthodoxy is probably why Reverend Henry Maundrell, a traveller and writer of the seventeenth century, said of the Alawi:

'Tis their principle to adhere to no particular religion but, chameleon-like, they put on the colour of the religion ... of the persons to

I am not entirely sure about that. Rather than having ‘no particular religion’, one suspects that the Alawis actually have a very particular religion indeed, but not one that is approved of by the majority Sunni Muslim population of the region. The Alawi survive by adopting the Shia Islamic doctrine of *taqqiya*, or ‘dissembling’ – a doctrine that is normally reserved for Muslims living in Infidel lands, until they have sufficient numbers to take over the country, but here it is being used to prevent persecution and eradication by ‘fellow’ Muslims. The Druze of Syria and Jordan do much the same. Like the Alawis, the Druze possess a secret and initiatory faith and profess to be good Muslims, to evade the wrath of Islam, but also happen to be a disproportionately large component of

the Israeli army.

Like the Druze, the Alawis were once a despised and persecuted minority within Islamic Syria, but they benefited considerably from the French presence in the region at the beginning of the twentieth century. The French wisely saw an ally in these Christio-Muslims, and gave the Alawis a degree of autonomy and favoured status within the armed forces. This influence played into the hands of the Alawis when, after a series of military coups, the very large Alawi element in the military took over the country; and Hafez al-Assad, the father of the current president, took control of the nation in 1970. The family have been in power ever since. It is a bit like elevating Shimon Peres to president of Saudi Arabia, but the situation has remained stable because the Alawi

control the military, and the rest of the Shia, Sunni and Christian population don't trust each other enough to form a coherent opposition. 'Divide and Rule', the British of the Empire used to call it.

The reason for researching the modern theo-political situation in Syria is that it would appear that a strand of the Galilean-Nazarene Sect of King Jesus may have regained control of Syria after nearly twelve centuries in the wilderness. Unfortunately, due to the secrecy of the Alawi-Nazarene sect, it is highly uncertain how much of the original Nazarene creed remains in the modern equivalent, if that is what it is. Would King Jesus-Justus recognise the Alawi-Nasiriya belief system? It is an interesting thought.

Back in the eighth century AD, the Byzantine Christian and Nazarene

population were most definitely being oppressed. But if the harsh yoke of Islam was not enough of a burden to bear, much of the Levant was then devastated by a huge earthquake in AD 749. Modern archaeologists' reports in the region identify patterns of destruction in the cities of Jerusalem, Pella, Bet Shean, Scythopolis, Caesarea, Tiberias, Jerash and Baalbek. Although the quake was centered upon the great fault-line under the Sea of Galilee, which runs from the south to the north of the entire Levant, the tremor left a swathe of devastation and destruction across wide areas. In Bet Shean just to the south of the Sea of Galilee, for instance, this great Roman town was levelled, abandoned and left to the swirling dusts of the hot Judean summers. When the site was finally excavated in the 1920s, the entire city

was found in the same condition as when it fell some 1,150 years earlier.

The people of Emesa and Palmyra would also have suffered, as the archaeological reports of destruction permeate southern Syria too. Although it has to be said that, while the Dead Cities of Aleppo display many cracks and movement in their masonry, the majority of the buildings are still standing. However, while it might have been possible to recover from one disaster, the region's double blow of Islam and an earthquake was too much to bear. Small villages, medium towns and great Byzantine cities across much of northern Syria were all abandoned, and Palmyra was no exception to this. It was time to move on. But where did this creed and its line of Sun-god priest-kings go to? Their intermediate

exile somewhere in Europe is not easy to locate, with many countries spawning Templar-Masonic cults and similar organisations that may have been linked to the Egypto-Emesan creed. Masonry is, after all, simply the remnants of an Egyptian Solar-cult that has elements of Egypto-Judaism and Simple Judaism grafted onto it.

One location for their exile may well be Britain, which would make sense in terms of the presence of the Temple of the Zodiac. One British coin in particular bears a striking resemblance to Emesan coins, and that is the image of the seated Britannia; an iconic hero-figure that was introduced to Britain during the reign of Emperor Hadrian and is still in use today. The British old one-penny coin proudly bears the image of Britannia, as do some of the new fifty-pence coins.

The image of this Roman Britannia cannot be equated with the standard image of Pax Roma, who is normally seated on a chair and holds an olive branch in her hand. Instead, the Roman Britannia is more warlike, for she sits on a rock beside a shield and carries a trident in her hand. Significantly, this imagery of Britannia seated on a rock is greatly reminiscent of the Persian figure of Apollo, who was similarly seated upon the Omphalos-Elagabal stone as can be seen in fig 16.5. Thus it would appear that Emperor Hadrian was introducing an image of a lady seated upon the Elagabal into Britain in AD 122, so why was this? Was the Elagabal still in Britain at this time, just at the time when the first Temple of the Zodiac was in the process of being completely destroyed? And who was this lady? In

some accounts she is said to be a representation of a Celtic goddess called Brigid, but surely Hadrian would have been honouring a known Roman deity rather than an obscure Celtic cult-figure.

An alternative history suggests that the name 'Britannia' comes from the travels of the Phoenician explorer Pytheas in about 320 BC, who recorded the islands in northwestern Europe as the Prettanike Πρεττανικε (Brettanike), from which 'Britain' was eventually derived. It is not known if this was a Celtic or a Phoenician word, but it seems to have been a name for the southwestern peninsular of Britain in particular, and no doubt it referred to an aspect of the valuable tin trade in that region. Thus it is likely that the name 'Britannia' came from this source, but that does not explain who

this iconic figure was.

However, the answer to this can be found on the Emesan coins of Elagabalus and Macrinus, whose reverse bears a strikingly similar image to the British Britannia. The seated lady on these Syrian coins is again said to be an image of Pax Roma, in the German numismatic catalogues, or Venus in some British catalogues, but these assertions are both wrong. In truth, the lady who appears on both the British and Syrian-Emesan coinage has to be an incarnation of the Greek Athene-Parthenos, as can be seen from the identical imagery on the coinage of Alexander the Great. It was the warlike Athene who wore a helmet, propped up on the top of her head like a hat, and held a spear and shield; and it was Athene who was influential enough in Judaeo-Syrian society to

have her own temple in Palmyra. Elagabalus' Athene even sits upon a palm-frond, a symbol of Palmyra-Tadmor, the city of the phoenix-palm.



Fig

16.17

Coins of:

Top left,

*Hadrian, AD 122, Wroxeter,
England.*





<i>Top right,</i>	<i>Queen Elizabeth, AD 1967, England.</i>
<i>Center,</i>	<i>Elagabalus, AD 220, Emesa, Syria.</i>
<i>Bottom,</i>	<i>Alexander the Great, 300 BC, Pergamon, Turkey. Note the ram's horns in Alaxander's hair – the symbol of Aries.</i>

This imagery of Athene on British, Emesan and Greek coinage therefore demonstrates a common cultural heritage and pedigree that goes way back into the fifth century BC and before. And since this image of Britannia-Athene sits on something very akin to the Omphalos-Elagabal stone, just as Apollo was portrayed as doing, this imagery of Britannia on the Imperial coinage of Britain strengthens the possibility that the Elagabal was at one time located in Britain. Significantly, the era of the British

image of Britannia actually precedes the Emesan versions by a considerable margin, which suggests that the cult of Athene and the Elagabal was established in Britain a century before its emergence in Syria.

If the Elagabal was housed in the first Temple of the Zodiac, from AD 79 to the early part of the second century, then this would be entirely so. But the whole emphasis of Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* is that the Fisher King (King Jesus-Arthur) had to be separated from the Grail stone (the Elagabal) in order that he could be allowed to die. This may be speculative, but if Munsalvasche (the Grail castle) was Dewa, then this is a clear allusion to the stone being moved from this location in AD 100 or so, when King Jesus did indeed expire.

The Parthenon on the Acropolis

in Athens originally contained a monumental seated statue of Athene Parthenos, upon which the image of Britannia was based. In fact, the Parthenon was named after Athene, and since the name Parthenos refers to a Virgin, we can see that Athene was probably another incarnation of Isis. Actually, since Isis (As-t ) was the sister-wife of Osiris (Asar ) and her sister Nephthys (Nebt-het ) was the sister-wife of Seth (Set ) , and both Isis and Nephthys were sisters themselves, we might here see a better explanation for the origins of the Greek Athene (Britannia). Isis was the goddess of the Cosmos and fecundity, and so in later centuries and cultures she became the universal stellar and fertility goddess: Ashtar, Astarte, Aphrodite and even the Christian Madonna and Child.

Meanwhile, Nephthys appears to have faded into the void of history, never to be seen again. However, Nephthys was the sister-wife of Seth, who was the more pugilist and warlike of the male god-brothers, Osiris and Seth, and so perhaps this martial spirit influenced Nephthys too. This may be why Plutarch described Isis as ‘generation’ (new life) and Nephthys as ‘corruption’ (death), but of course *katapheiro* καταφθειρω can also mean ‘destruction’.²⁹

If this analysis is correct, then Nephthys too would have been a virgin goddess from Egyptian theology, but this time a goddess who could invoke war and victory, just as Athene did. In which case, the dualist sisters of Isis and Nephthys may well have become the dualist Aphrodite (Isis, Venus) and Athene (Britannia).

While the statue of Athene in the Parthenon no longer exists, we can see exactly what this golden colossus must have looked like from the coins of Alexander the Great. This Greek imagery clearly demonstrates the true heritage of the British and Emesan coinage, for the lady in question is seated in exactly the same fashion and wears the same helmet, spear and shield. In the Emesan version, she even carries a miniature goddess Nike (Victory) in her extended hand, just as on the coinage of Alexander the Great.*⁵ The only peculiar item on the more modern British coinage is that incongruous lighthouse that lies behind the seated Britannia. But, thinking laterally, this could well be a covert reference to the conical stone of the Omphalos-Elagabal; for these Sun-stones were icons of the Sun-god and

also creators of light.

If readers would like to see an exact replica of the Parthenon and its colossal statue of Athene, I would recommend a trip to Nashville, Tennessee. Here, an exact replica of the Parthenon was made in the 1920s, and a full-size bronze replica of the statue of Athene was commissioned in the 1990s to complete the project.

Great Seal of Liberty

Alexander was not simply the conqueror of Persia in the third century BC, he was also a pharaoh of Egypt, and his victory over Egypt founded the Ptolemaic dynasty that ended with Queen Cleopatra. Much of Emesan culture was obviously derived from both Egypt and Persia, the two nations that Alexander conquered and the two

nations that Queen Thea Muse Ourania was descended from. The only anomaly here is Britain, which initially appears to be totally divorced from the politics and religions of these Near Eastern nations. So how did the image of Athene-Britannia and the sacred stone upon which she sat become a central icon of British culture? And how did the concept of the zodiac arrive in Britain, when Celtic culture does not appear to have had the zodiac as we know it?^{**6} The answer, I would again suggest, lies in the exile of King Jesus-Arthur and the leaders of the Galilean Sect to Dewa, and the establishment of their Egypto-Judaic belief systems in Britain.

It entirely possible that it was King Jesus-Arthur and his fellow exiles who initially brought the Egypto-Greek imagery of Athene-

Britannia to Britain, along with the Egypto-Greek version of the zodiac. In which case, there appears to be a traceable line of descent for these coins – from Egypt, to Greece, to Persia, to Judaea, to England, and back to Emesa. And while it is true that some of this imagery may well have bypassed elements of this suggested route, the adoption of new cults and new sacred imagery is much easier to explain alongside population movements. And population movements is what we appear to have, to and from each of these locations.

However, while the route for exiled Emesan beliefs and culture within Europe may be hard to prove, the final exodus of these Emesan priest-kings to a new promised land is rather more certain, and that new land was probably America. The similarity

in iconography to be found between these two widely separated cultures is just as striking as in the previous examples of coinage, but they are also rather more unique. Surprising as it may seem, it may well be from these ancient priest-kings of Emesa that the Great Seal of America was conceived and designed.

Perhaps we are all aware by now that the reverse of the Great Seal portrays an image of the Great Pyramid with its summit still truncated, which may suggest that Charles Thompson, the seal's primary designer, was an Egyptophile who was strongly influenced by masonic iconography and lore. However, what is less well known is that the obverse of the seal is remarkably similar to the traditional symbology of Emesa. Take a look at the following images of the coins of

Ouranius Antoninus, the priest king of Emesa who reigned in the AD 220s, and compare these to the equivalent images of the American Great Seal.

Take a look at the image of the eagle, in both the American and Emesan versions. Of all the numismatic (coin) eagle imagery of the Roman period and all the many possible avian poses, this particular posture is both unique to and typical of the Severan dynasty. Note how the eagle stands, legs apart and wings spread – a position that is not natural to the species at all. In addition, both birds are carrying a ribbon or a wreath in their beak and both clutch sprigs (or a sprig and arrows) in their talons. The American version has been modified slightly to include the number thirteen in the arrows, leaves and stars, to represent the original thirteen states of

the Union; and the stars have been thoughtfully arranged into a Star of David. However, is this not the primary symbology of the United States, upon a second century coin of Emesa?

Remember also that in Palmyran terms, the eagle is an image of the Phoenix, which is in turn a precessional-astrological icon of the flying Sun-disk of Ra – it is an image of the transition from one Great Precessional Month to another. This symbology explains the legend that appears on the reverse of the Great Seal which says ‘Novus Ordo Seclorum’ or ‘New Order of the Ages’. It is often said that this means ‘New World Order’, but the phrase actually comes from the fourth Eclogue of Virgil which reads in part:

... a new great order of the ages is born; for

now the Virgin and the age of Saturn have returned; now a new Child has been sent from the heavens.³⁰



*Fig 16.18 The Great Seal of America (above)
Coins of Ouranius Antoninus,
priest-king of Emesa (below).*

The Novus Ordo Seclorum is therefore the new age of Pisces, the new Great

Month that began in about AD 10. This is why Virgil goes on to mention the 'Virgin' and the 'new Child sent from the heavens'. This is a simple reference to the Star Prophecy of the East, which foretold the birth of the new Piscean Fisher King, who was supposed to have been King Jesus-Arthur (or even King John the Baptist); a prophecy that was eventually hijacked by Emperor Vespasian. The Phoenix was a symbol of the new Great Month and on the Great Seal this new year is being portrayed in the form of the Palmyran Phoenix-eagle. As an aside, the legend on the Emesan eagle-coin reads Dhmarc Exouciac (ΔΗΜΑΡΧ ΕΞΟΥΙΑΚ), or *tribunus plebis* in Latin. This refers to the 'tribune of the people', or the protector of the common man.

Now look to the two versions of

the pyramidal image on the reverse of the Great Seal. The American version carries an image of the Great Pyramid, in its unfinished form, and a pyramidion or cap-stone being placed on the top. The Emesan image is of the Omphalos-Elagabal, the pyramidal Sun-stone of Emesa. Here, the 'pyramidion' is formed from the classical form of the Greek temple, and the circular icon above the pyramidal mound is no longer the 'all-seeing eye', but the image of a crescent Moon. The Moon is a representation of the feminine goddess figure of Selene-Isis-Ourania, the dualist opposite of the male Sun-god of Ra-Horus-Eli-Helios. Does this represent evidence that the American system of government was derived not simply from Christian principles, but also from the Galilean Sect of Judaeo-Syria?

There are a number of fundamental similarities between Egypto-Galilean and American societies, which have been explored in this book, including the use of capitalism, taxation, banking and the election of leaders. It is true that the election process for a Galilean high priest was much later and more limited than in Athens, with the voting being restricted to the priesthood, but all the same it is a very early example of the democratic electoral process in action. They had even established the system whereby the candidate with the most money always wins, which is again very reminiscent of the American system of government.

In addition, we can also see a great similarity in art and iconography between the Roman Empire and America. The Jefferson Memorial is a

copy of the Pantheon in Rome; the Parthenon in Nashville is a copy of the Parthenon in Athens; the Washington Square Arch is a Roman Arch; the US Supreme Court is Roman in design; Baltimore's Washington Monument is based upon the column of Trajan; Washington's Washington Monument is Egypto-Roman; the Lincoln Memorial is based upon a Greek temple in a Roman forum; the Virginia University rotunda is a copy of the Pantheon, as is the Florida Supreme Court and the National Gallery of Art in Washington. Readers who have absorbed the book *Cleopatra* will also know that America has long used the symbolism of the *fascies*, the Roman symbol of government that rather fell from grace in recent decades and eventually spawned the derogatory term 'fascist'; and that the Statue of Liberty may be an

image of Queen Cleopatra Selene depicted in the guise of Isis-Ourania.

Indeed, the very symbolism of the Statue of Liberty again comes from the Roman Empire in general and from Syria in particular. The goddess Liberty was a popular image on Roman coinage, but no more so than during the Severan dynasty who originated from Syria. In the images in fig 16.19 we can see Liberty holding the cornucopia, which just happens to look rather similar to the Statue of Liberty's torch. While in her right hand she holds a *pileus*, or conical hat, that happens to look like a bell – the Liberty Bell.



Fig 16.19 Libertas (Liberty) on a coin of Emperor Elagabalus (top). Liberty is holding a long sceptre and a pileus cap.
Libertas on a coin of Julianus of Pannonia, a third century AD usurper to Emperors Carinus and Maximian (bottom). Liberty is holding a cornucopia and a pileus cap.

So who was the goddess, Liberty? The answer to this is not entirely certain. She is said to be the counterpart of Britannia, and from her many guises on

Roman coins it would seem to be clear that she was actually an incarnation of Minerva, the Roman name for Athena. But this is a Minerva-Athena in a less warlike pose, a manifestation of the goddess following a conflict when liberty has been reestablished, just like the Liberty statue erected on the Aventine Hill in Rome after the Second Punic War.

Having said all that, Liberty also appears to be a female counterpart to Sol Invictus, hence the darting rays from her headgear and the blazing star symbolism of the podium for the American statue. But Liberty predates Sol Invictus, who was created by Emperor Elagabalus, by several centuries; so how did a goddess turn into a god? The answer lies in Palmyra, once more, for Yahibol was a masculine Sun-god who held a very

similar symbolism to that of the feminine Liberty. Thus Elagabalus' new god, Sol Invictus, is likely to have been a fusion of Liberty and Yahibol. The Sun-god had always been male (the dualist counterpart of the feminine Moon) and so it probably made sense to return Liberty to a male guise. See fig 16.1 for an image of Sol Invictus and fig 12.5 for an image of Yahibol, with both deities wearing the darting Sun-rays of the Statue of Liberty.

Angels and Demons

I am sure that readers can think of many more examples of mimicry in art and architecture between Rome and America, but these similarities don't necessarily imply a cultural equivalence. However, the commissioning of the Great Seal of

America – which is effectively America's 'coat of arms', an insignia that is borne by every citizen on their passports and official documentation – is a different matter. The Great Seal represents the American identity, its national psyche – as does the Statue of Liberty for that matter – and that identity appears to have been greatly influenced by the Egypto-Galilean priest-kings of Palmyra and Emesa.

As we approach the end of this investigation, we therefore have a number of unanswered questions that will have to be explored in a later work, for this is very much an ongoing investigation. The presence of King Jesus-Arthur at Dewa is, for example, presently based upon circumstantial evidence and local mythology. It would have been interesting to have fully excavated the entire site of the Temple

of the Zodiac to recover all the available archaeological evidence, yet this was never done because of commercial time constraints; and the subsequent building of a shopping center with an underground car-park on the site has probably destroyed the remaining evidence forever. The discovery of some more slivers of the Dewa inscription would have been more than useful, for instance. Likewise, the evidence for the Elagabal-Omphalos stone at Dewa is also circumstantial. However, it has to be said that the belief that this stone is now in Scotland is widely and fervently held, and a transportation route via the Dewa Temple of the Zodiac is certainly not out of the question.

However, for those readers interested in the royal and spiritual

aspects of this era, I suppose the biggest unknown is the eventual fate of King Jesus and his family. Had he lived out the rest of his life in Chester, it is entirely possible that he was buried there. Although, if the Romans were feeling particularly magnanimous, they may have allowed his mummified body to be transported back to the East. If Robert Maxwell – the highly controversial and disgraced proprietor of the Daily Mirror newspaper in Britain – can get a state funeral and burial on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, I am sure that King Jesus-Justus could have done likewise. So perhaps there is room for the Talpiot Tomb to be involved in this continuing story after all.

Then there is the fate of Jesus' children to consider. We have already seen that the Roman system was

hunting down any close relatives of Jesus and so many sons, brothers and nephews may well have been eliminated. However, the patriarchal Roman authorities may not have considered the women of the family to be such a threat, and the Talmud in particular indicates that Mary Magdalene was poor but still very much alive after the fall of Jerusalem. But Egypto-Judaic genealogy is preserved primarily through the female line, not the male, and so it is the fate of Mary and her daughters, sisters and nieces that is the most important element here. The resulting traditions of Mary Magdalene's exile in southern France are legion, and I will leave readers to read the many works that have already been written on that topic.

I myself have no doubt that there

are some individuals in the modern world who are directly descended from the family of King Jesus, and perhaps some of those individuals are still members of the royalty and aristocracy. But unless a society, guild, fraternity, association, organisation or aristocracy has relevance to the people, it will surely wither and die, and that is exactly what we see today within European aristocracy and royalty. The power and influence of King Jesus-Arthur was built upon magical illusions devised by Hero of Alexandria, but a trick wine-jug or a magnetic meteorite is no longer sufficient to draw in the faithful and cow the masses. Nevertheless, this does bring us back to the main theme of this book and the main theme of Dan Brown's *Angels & Demons*. Do we want an aristocracy and leadership

who continue to promote *gnosis* – discovery, research, science and technology – or do we regress back to a conviction that the entire knowledge of mankind was written by an egocentric, lying charlatan some two thousand years ago; or by a genocidal, illiterate Bedouin some fourteen centuries ago?

The choice is ours.

Let's go forwards.

❖ ❖ ❖ End ❖ ❖ ❖

*1 The name of the emperor was Elagabalus, while the stone was called the Elagabal. Readers might like to ponder on this difference in spelling, before confusion sets in.

*2 The Phoenicians were a substantially Egyptianised people who lived on the Levantine coast and dominated the sea trade in this era. Their name, art, architecture and religion were all based upon Egyptian antecedents, and so the Phoenicians are likely to have been refugees from Egypt, possibly yet more of the Hyksos refugees from many centuries previous to this era. And if you want to see an exact look-alike for Queen Nefertiti, there is no better place to start than Lebanon.

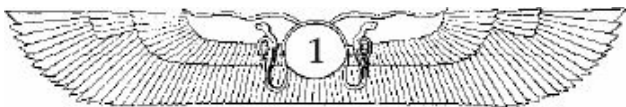
*3 Note that this high priest was known as Ouranius Antoninus, whereas Elagabalus himself was

originally called Aurelius Antoninus.

*4 The Grail legends say that Excalibur originally belonged to King David. However, since the Benben-Elagabal was also an Egyptian relic of great antiquity, a sword dating from this early era (c. 950 BC) is entirely possible.

*5 As an aside, since Alexander reigned more than three centuries before the constellations turned from Aries to Pisces, he would have identified himself with sheep rather than fish. It is for this reason that Alexander was depicted with ram's horns in his hair and adopted the hypocorism of the 'Two Horned One'.

**6 The Celts were great astrologers but there is no evidence of exactly what kind of symbols they used for the constellations, nor how those constellations were arranged. The Celtic zodiac in many New Age books is actually an invention by Robert Graves, who was imaginatively following the *Ogygia, seu rerum Hibernicarum Chronologia*. There is no evidence that this zodiac is based in reality, and even if it is, it is not the standard Egypto-Greek zodiac.



Appendix 1

Temple of Bel

The Temple of Bel at Palmyra contains elements of calendrical numerology, which have been deliberately incorporated into its design. There appear to have been 51 pillars in the eastern and southern (and probably northern) sides of the cloister (excluding the large end-pillars), resulting in 52 gaps between these pillars. It is likely that this design was based upon the standard 52-week year

that we know was in use in this era, and so each of the spaces between these pillars may well have represented a particular week of the year.

This calendrical system, plus the presence of an Egyptian entrance-gate, a prominent zodiac and an image of the flying Sun-disk in the inner-sanctum, would suggest an overt Egyptian influence in the design of this temple. Unfortunately, this early assessment was not borne out by the units of measure used on the site, which did not exactly conform to known Egyptian cubits lengths. Around the cloister, the pillar diameters, bases and spacings appeared to be designed using the Egyptian Royal or Thoth cubit (tc) of 52.35 cm, but the measurements always left a slight but consistent error. It was finally realised that if the cubit

measure was increased in length to 54 cm, the errors were all eradicated.

Given the location and probable history of Palmyra, the cubit length of 54 cm that appears to have been used in the cloister is likely to have been a copy of the Persian or Babylonian cubit (pc), which measured a shade under 54 cm. This Eastern unit of measure eventually became the basis of the later Black cubit of Arabia, which was in use during the Persian Abbasid era and measured almost exactly 54 cm. The Yemenite Jews also used a 54 cm cubit length. This would suggest that the greatest architectural influences on Palmyra were Parthio-Persian and not Egyptian.

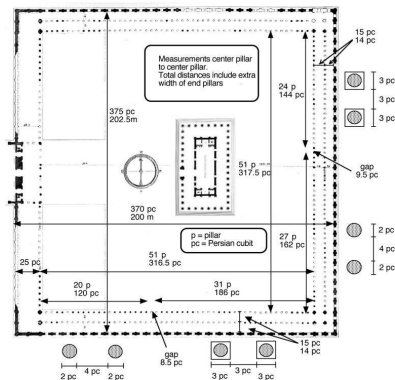


Fig 17.1 Plan of the cloister of the Temple of Bel at Palmyra. The overall measurements are estimated from the individual pillar spacings, as the laser measuring device could not cope with lengths in excess of 60 m.

Note: Caution, the original drawings of the Temple of Bel by Robert Wood are not as accurate as they at first appear. Because of this, I was compelled to return to Palmyra to take accurate measurements with a laser-ranger. Errors in the original drawings include:

The temple platform is transposed

north-south within the cloister enclosure. This does not appear to have been a simple printing error in Wood's report, as the cloister itself is orientated correctly.

The number of pillars on the eastern cloister is incorrect, there appear to be 51 and not 56.

The small gap in the eastern cloister is asymmetric, rather than symmetric.

There is a similar gap in the southern cloister, which is also asymmetric.

The dimensions of the pillars on the temple platform are diagrammatic in Wood's plans, rather than being accurate representations.

There are 'gateways' (gaps) between the pillars in the northern and southern sides of the temple platform.

However, when we move from the temple cloister to the temple platform itself the situation changes, and the Parthio-Persian cubit (pc) does not appear to match any of the

measurements on this central site. The first thing that was noticed, is that the large slabs which raise the temple platform above the courtyard and upon which the temple's pillars rest, alternately measure 172 and 209 cm; and while the length of 172 cm was unfamiliar, a measurement of 209 cm approximated very closely to 4 Thoth cubits (tc). But the pillar diameters, bases and spacings did not conform to this same measurement standard whatsoever. Finally, I discovered that the entire temple platform was designed in Egyptian hand units of 7.48 cm in length, multiples of which either resulted in Egyptian Thoth cubits (seven hands and 52.35 cm) or Egyptian Short cubits (six hands and 44.9 cm). Suddenly, the pillar diameters, bases and spacings resolved precisely into simple whole

numbers.

Thus, it would appear that the Temple of Bel at Palmyra incorporated a blend of Parthian and Egyptian units of measure, a combination of metrological standards that mirror the Egyptian and Parthian genealogical and cultural roots of Queen Thea Muse Ourania herself, and which strengthen the links that have been proposed between the city of Palmyra and Queen Thea Muse.

The resulting design for the Temple platform has a high degree of metrological symmetry, with whole numbers of cubits being used in nearly all cases. The numbers of pillars used on the platform follow the calendrical design of the cloister, there being 8×15 pillars around the perimeter of the platform which result in 7×14 openings between these pillars. It is

likely that this numerology is a coded reference to the standard working week and fortnight that we are all familiar with today, with the modern week system being based upon a quarter of a Lunar month of approximately 28 days. This was also the week-length that was described in the Book of Genesis, which demonstrates the antiquity of this seven-day calendrical system. So each gap between these great pillars on the temple platform may well have represented a particular day of the week, while the openings between the smaller pillars in the surrounding cloister represented particular weeks of the year.

This supposition is perhaps confirmed by the position of the entrance to the Temple. If we count off days of the week northwards from the

southwest pillar on the temple platform, we can see five spaces between the pillars representing the five days of the working week. The entrance-way into the Temple then takes up the next two openings, and so the entrance to the Temple appears to represent the weekend. The traditional Judaic week was six days of work and then a day of rest on the Sabbath, or the day of the Star (now the day of the Sun or Sunday in the Christian world). However, the layout of the Temple of Bel would appear to indicate that the Palmyrans had already instituted our normal two-day weekend of Saturday and Sunday, and the fact that the entranceway to the Temple represents both of these days may well imply that the entire weekend was set aside for Temple worship. This entranceway looks like a direct command to the

people of Palmyra to attend the service, as the Temple seems to be boldly declaring that ‘these two days are mine’.

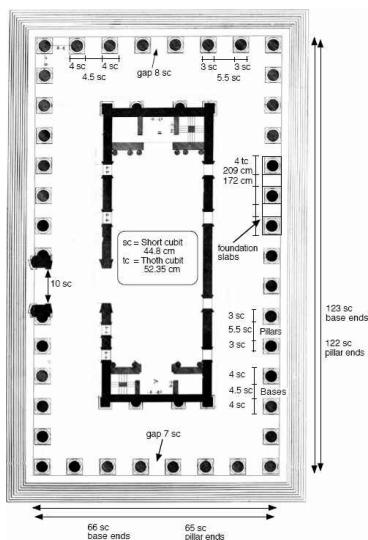


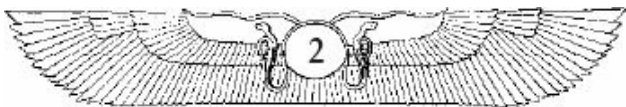
Fig 17.2 Plan of the Temple of Bel at Palmyra. The units in use here are either Egyptian Thoth cubits (tc) or Egyptian Short cubits (sc). Although this diagram does not show it very clearly, the end of the pillar-bases is also the edge of the

It is also worth noting that the design of this temple is very similar to the design of the Temple of Jerusalem. Saul-Josephus indicates that the Temple of Jerusalem measured 20×60 cubits, and one presumes that the Thoth cubit (tc) was in use on this site because that was the sacred cubit of the Old Testament. Thus the Temple of Jerusalem, for all the many superlatives laid upon it, was relatively small. In comparison, the internal dimensions of the Temple of Bel measure approximately 23×70 tc (27×81 sc),^{*1} and so its dimensions retain roughly the same 3 : 1 length to breadth ratio while being about 15% larger than the Jerusalem Temple.

The second Temple of Jerusalem was constructed by Herod the Great in

the last decades of the first century BC, while the Temple of Bel was constructed in the mid first and early second centuries AD. It is entirely possible, therefore, that the Temple of Bel was a copy of the Jerusalem Temple – a later copy that was deliberately increased in size to be more prestigious than its parent.

*1 These measurements were not taken on site by myself, due internal partitions and restrictions on tourists.



Appendix 2

Water to Wine

There follows the original explanation by Hero of Alexandria as to how one of his trick jugs for turning water into wine actually worked. The trick relies on the fact that the surface tension of water will not allow a liquid to flow through small holes if the liquid is held in place with a vacuum. The vacuum is maintained by covering the small hole in the handle, and when this is released the wine will then flow out. Hero made

a variety of these trick jugs of various designs, one of which was used by King Jesus at his wedding to Mary Magdalene at Cana.

As conjuring tricks go, this has to have been the most influential ever devised. Forget Robert Houdin, Harry Houdini, David Copperfield or David Blaine, this is the trick of the deca-millennia (the last 10,000 years). Sadly, billions of people down through the ages have fallen for this ruse without even seeing the trick themselves, and used it as a foundation stone for a worldwide belief system. Perhaps future generations will be bowing down before Mr Copperfield and calling him the Son of God. Who knows?

The historical reality of this situation is much more prosaic. Jesus was descended from the Magi, which

is why the Magi were said to have visited his birth. It is from the Magi that modern magic was derived, and so it should not be so surprising that King Jesus utilised magic at his wedding. But there was a serious side to all this jocular trickery, for much of the knowledge that lay behind these skills laid the foundations of modern science. This was not magic as we would understand it, but *gnosis* – science.

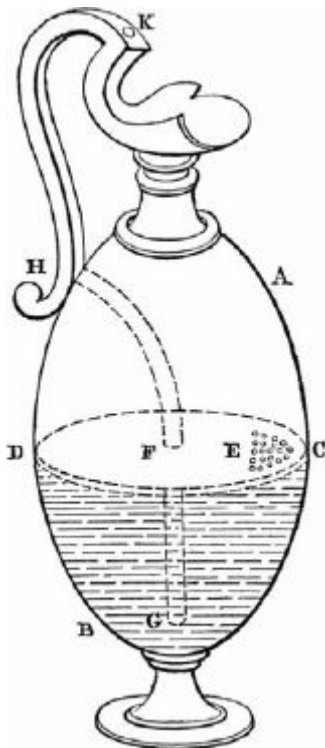


Fig 17.3 Trick jug devised by Hero of Alexandria and used by King Jesus at his wedding at Cana.

Section 8.

A Vessel for discharging liquids in varying proportions.²

A jar can be made receiving and discharging a greater quantity of liquid at one time than at another, and in such a way that, when wine and water are poured into it, it shall discharge at one time pure water, at another time unmixed wine, and, again, a mixture of the two. Its construction is as follows. Let A B (fig. 17.3) be a pitcher having a partition in the middle, C D. In the partition, near the circumference of the vessel, let small holes be pierced in a curve, as at E. In the opposite side of the partition let there be a circular aperture, F, through which the tube F G H is to be inserted, being soldered into the partition, and reaching nearly to the bottom of the vessel at G. Let the other mouth of the tube H issue at the side of the pitcher, under the handle, and be soldered into the handle which must be hollow, and have a hole on its outer surface at K, which may be closed with the finger when necessary. If, then, closing the vent, as before, we pour any liquid into the jar, the liquid poured into the upper chamber will remain there, not being able to continue its way through the narrow holes into the lower chamber, as there is no other outlet for the air

than through the vent K. When, however, we unclosethe vent, the liquid will descend into the chamber beneath, and then the jar will hold more. If; then, we first pour in wine so as to fill the chamber B C D, and then, closing the vent, pour water upon it, the two cannot mix, and if we invert the jar it will emit pure water. But, when we unclosethe vent, the water continuing to flow, the wine will flow out also, since air can enter through K to fill up the void left; and afterwards the wine will flow out unmixed. We may also pour in the water first, and then, stopping the vent, pour wine upon it, so as to pour out wine for some, wine and water for others, and mere water for those whom we wish to jest with.

In other words, the magical jug was a joke, a trick, not a miracle to be used as the basis of a new religion.

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Notes & References

- Bible:** All references taken from the King James edition, although the text is often modernised for clarity.
AA = Against Apion, Ant = Antiquities, JW = Jewish war, L = Life.
Page references are to the Loeb Classical Library system.
- Josephus:** Quotes taken from William Whiston's translation, which was first published in 1736; some references are from the Penguin Classics edition by G. Williamson, first published 1959.
- Manetho** All page numbers are taken from the LCL edition, editor G. Goold.

Within the referencing system in this book, some of the reference numbers are prefixed with letters. This is to give the reader an idea of the source of the reference, without having to look up that particular reference. This only applies to the more popular reference works, and the following have been prefixed:

B = Bible, M = Manetho, J = Josephus,
H = Herodotus, T = Talmud, KN =
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διαβολος αρι-μαθητης